WHY LETELIER DIED NOW **PETER WINN**

THE NATION

OCTOBER 9, 1976 *60 cents*

Bas, Tachydromos (Greece)

Worse than an Error
KISSINGER'S AFRICAN MISCHIEF
Immanuel Wallerstein

THE POLITICS OF CYNICISM
Manipulating the MIAs
Robert K. Musil

Banks as Robbers: How They Stole My Time
WILLIAM SAROYAN

REVIEWS OF RECENT POETRY
New Poems by Merwin, Carruth, Perlman

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LETTERS

the abortion issue

Dublin, N.H.
I just came across the July 17th *Nation* and was appalled at the continued obstacles placed in the way of obtaining an abortion ["Abortions Denied" by Lawrence Lader].

In our backward state the situation is the same—but Connecticut? Ouch! And now Carter is being attacked by Catholic bishops for expressing the view that women should have the right to choose. . . . *Beekman H. Pool*

Cincinnati, Ohio
As a nurse I realize what Lawrence Lader says in his article is true. I cannot speak for other cities, but I know that in this one, there are very few hospitals that perform abortions. Even the ones that do, will not come right out and admit it. There are a few doctors who do them in their offices, but that is too expensive for the person with a below-average income. These are the people who really suffer. They are also the people who can least afford to have unwanted children.

It seems that Mr. Lader's suggestion to cut these hospitals off from federal aid is a good one. . . . *C. Burdette*

Henry Wallace in context

Washington, D.C.
It is indisputable that the United States has wounded itself and caused much greater suffering for others over the last twenty-five years in the name of an anti-Communist foreign policy. It is also true that this foreign policy was, in large measure, the creation of Harry Truman, and that Henry Wallace opposed it. It is not unreasonable that present-day Left liberals and radicals will find much to admire in Henry Wallace. Richard Walton (whose *Henry Wallace, Harry Truman, and the Cold War* Victor Navasky reviewed in *The Nation* of Sept. 11) does admire Wallace and Navasky believes Wallace to have been essentially right about the future failures of American foreign policy.

I too, with the aid of twenty-twenty hindsight, think that the liberals who baited Wallace and backed Truman overlooked the potential for disaster in the foreign policy trend which they applauded. In light of My Lai, the 1948 ADA liberal makes an easy and frequently used revisionist target and Wallace can easily pass for a prophet.

But it is necessary, if one wishes to understand the politics of the late 1940s, to state *why* many liberals felt that they could not make common cause with Wallace, and Navasky, despite his review's general intelligence and balance, did not do so forcefully enough. By 1948 Wallace was a fellow traveler and the Progressive Party a Communist front. These are harsh terms and in 1976 one feels uneasy with them. Yet without them what are we to make of Wallace's book, *Toward World Peace*, a considerable part of which is devoted to what Dwight Macdonald called "a mendacious whitewash of the Moscow trials"? Or how do we understand why a strange Progressive Party platform plank endorsed a "Macedonian homeland," a favorite plan of Tito's, only up until the Yugoslav break with Moscow, whereupon the plank was excised? This may seem like tedious sectarian quibbling, but it had real political consequences. In 1948, the overriding goal of the world Communist movement (and then there was such a thing) was the destruction of the proposed Marshall Plan, which was the lifeblood of the struggling democracies of Western Europe. Wallace's opposition to the Marshall Plan meshed neatly with the aims of those far less "idealistic" than he.

What sort of movement did anti-Communist liberals see Wallace putting himself consciously or unconsciously at the service of? In 1948, Gulag thrived in the Soviet Union. Stalin's lieutenant Zhdanov was superintending a vicious

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EDITORIALS

The Mechanics Take Over

It has already been sufficiently noted that the Great Debate was a Great Flop. And not just technically, though the twenty-seven-minute breakdown of the 25-cent capacitor served to underline all the other failures of this encounter. The Great Flop has been treated solemnly, humorously, acidly, sarcastically, even indignantly, but there are grounds for considering it almost an outrage against any rational way of dealing with politics and perhaps against the political system itself.

There is enough blame to be spread around quite widely and it is hard to allocate justly the shares of responsibility for the fiasco. The truth is that it was about as unenlightening a political exchange as can be imagined. The candidates themselves sounded, most of that endless time, like a pair of middle-level bureaucrats arguing about their division's budget, bucking for the job of supervisor. It came as a kind of shock when something one or the other of them said reminded one that it was the American Presidency they were discussing.

The most arresting idea came from Ford. The President actually argued for a divided government—for stalemate—when he said, "I think the American people want a Republican President to check on any excesses that come out of the next Congress, if it is a Democratic Congress." So we have the concept of Vetoism now officially added to the language of American politics. It was uncharacteristic of the generally wandering course of this "debate" that Carter actually had a chance to respond to this extremely odd notion of yet another "balance" in our governmental system. He did this not very impressively by attempting to saddle Ford with the record of Nixon, whom he seemed to think more effective.

Most of the time the topic changed as rapidly as cocktail-party chat. The villain here is the absurdly prevalent notion that political discourse requires the mediation of the media. So those journalists solemnly sat there asking their informed and "serious" questions out of the blue—which must be the color of irrelevance.

The viewer (is it possible to say "listener"?) was made to wonder whose turn it was and why a topic suddenly disappeared as a new one came on stage. There was no flow to the exchanges, and the whole affair amounted to a series of short campaign speeches, punctuated by questions from right field—nothing from the left. In short, it was a caricature of a debate and it hardly matters who "won," a question which in any case is buried in millions of consciousnesses and unconsciousnesses, beyond the reach of the most sophisticated pollster.

The conventional wisdom is that Carter has somehow fallen behind in the race for the White House—that he has blown his big lead in the polls, stumbled, lost momentum, faltered or whatever, and that the contest is now "up for grabs." The evidence for this alleged decline rests in the minds of those professional handicappers, the members of the national press corps—they have not produced anything convincing to persuade the public that their hunches are any more correct than they have been in past elections.

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Still, from an altogether different stance, one that does not look at a Presidential election as a cross between a sports event and a melodrama, it does seem that the Carter campaign so far has been neither brilliant nor inspiring. This is the more surprising because the Democrat has the better, and easier, case to make. To take just one recent fact on the major subject, the economy, the federal government's own figures reveal that another 2.5 million Americans have sunk to the poverty level during the continuing Nixon-Ford recession.

Carter should be crying out against the heartless and inefficient policies of an administration that encourage this steady slippage from prosperity. Instead, he mutters statistics and tries to get a hand on those slippery indices. More passion and more indignant generalizing on the social conditions of this country would serve him better, and us as well.

The bones of his campaign are showing through the threadbare rhetoric. Every few days one of his talkative campaign staff gives out with a new "strategy," and Carter seems to follow most of this bad advice, tacking and veering in the breezes of the political polls, shifting from one approach to another. Never have campaign technicians, those parasites of modern politics, been more evident and less helpful. They behave as if the famous "mainstream" of American politics—along which Carter should sail with confidence and style—were as narrow as the entrance to a shoal-filled harbor, for which they alone have the charts. And the press covers these second-rate tacticians much more thoroughly than the candidate: thus he gets lost in this background chatter.

Ford, of course, having a bad and fundamentally unappealing case to make, must rely on the twists and turns his staff puts him through. He seems quite pleased with his role as puppet of his image merchants. That trip through the Deep South, courting the reactionary vote of discredited segregationists (including that good old "Democrat," George Wallace), was as revolting a performance as one could expect.

As we noted earlier, it is astonishing that Ford is openly offering himself as the candidate of the Veto Party. A Louis Harris poll has recently made a sort of case for this tactic, but, in our view, a bad case. It purports to show that, by the narrow margin of 40 to 38 per cent, "most voters favor different parties in control of Congress and the White House."

The trouble with this attempt to feel the pulse is that, as often in these opinion exercises, the pollster asked questions that influenced the answers. For example, one statement put to the sample which got a 54-to-24 favorable response was on whether such a divided government is "a good way to be sure that one party can't get away with corruption and misuse of power in office." (The responders, we believe, were really answering another question: "Isn't *anything* that would end corruption and abuse of power a good idea?") The response to the proposition that divided government "can better prevent the growth of big government" (40 to 29 in favor) was equally loaded, in our view, and simply struck the popular "anti-government," anti-institutional chord. A broader question on whether a united government would have a better chance to solve the country's problems might well have elicited a more positive answer.

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The Nation is published weekly (except for first week in January, and bi-weekly in July and August) by the Nation Company and copyright 1976 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10014. Tel: CH 2-8400. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.

Subscription Price: One year, $21.00; two years, $37.00. Add $1 per year postage for Canada and Mexico; $2 other foreign.

Change of Address: It is essential that subscribers ordering a change of address give four weeks' notice and provide their old as well as their new address. Please give Zip Code numbers for both addresses.

Manuscripts. All work submitted will be read by the editors. The magazine cannot, however, be responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts unless they are accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes.

THE NATION

Volume 223
No. 11

The Sherrod Library
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Johnson City, Tennessee

OCT 1976

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What is lacking in the campaign so far is any strongly felt general argument for a change in the way the public's business is run. Ford, as the incumbent, can hardly make that case, even though he sometimes seems to be attempting it, and he is hobbled by the mean-spirited and reactionary nature of his party and its platform.

Carter has no such obstacle in his way. He has a strong case to make for his party and its intentions, as spelled out in the platform adopted in July. All he need do is forget the fractionalizing special-interest appeals his advisers are pushing at him and speak with feeling about the great national problems the federal government must solve because it alone is in a position to do so.

There is yet time for Governor Carter to take that stance and adopt that tone. In another couple of weeks it might be too late, and that would be close to a disaster.

Gunning for Votes

Speaking of vote hunting, President Ford gave a peculiarly repellent series of speechlets on the subject of the right to bear arms during his Reaganesque swing through the Deep South. To start with, we might recall, as Gerald Ford did not, that the Constitution guarantees the right of "the people" to bear arms. It says nothing about the individual's right to his fowling piece or whatever, and the clause, by any construction, was meant to encourage the existence of a militia under popular control as a check on a standing army in an all-powerful state.

In the hands of the National Rifle Association and other members of the gun lobby, not to mention assorted right wingers in this country's politics, that sound concept has been perverted to assert that every citizen has a right to pack a gun, and no questions asked. If Ford has any understanding of what the Founders had in mind, he showed no sign of it when he spoke in Bay St. Louis, Gulfport and Biloxi. He began his homilies on guns in those three Mississippi towns by saying that he understood he was in "a great hunting and fishing area." In Bay St. Louis he said he did not "believe that all of the law-abiding citizens of this country should be deprived of the right of freedom of arms." When he got to Gulfport, according to Roger Simon of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, he added the phrase "for their own protection." At Biloxi he seriously escalated (and confused) the idea when he said "for their personal, national protection." His staff proved incapable of explaining the personal-national equation, or why the defense of the Republic now needed the added help of gun-toting citizens.

In Miami, where he addressed the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Ford dropped his gun campaign (police chiefs tend to mistrust an armed citizenry) and spoke only of the need to "give the streets back to law-abiding citizens." His last stop was in Mobile, Ala., where Gov. George C. Wallace, the crippled victim of a man with a gun, sat near him on the platform. Again, Ford said nothing about the right to bear arms.

But at those earlier stops he did not hesitate to distort the Constitution in his chase for votes among the hunters. He never told them that the most that gun reformers are after, and have failed to get, is the registration of weapons in the hands of citizens—not "the people."

The Lone Ranger

Eugene McCarthy, the independent nonparty candidate for President, is up to his old tricks. That is, he is contributing gags and bits of refined egotism to this year's political discourse. His latest joke about his attempt to join the Presidential "debates" is that "we could answer both Ford and Carter in fourteen minutes without sound." His ego emerges in his claim that the serious issues of the day "will not be presented for any judgment in this campaign unless I'm in it."

The trouble with McCarthy's effort this year lies precisely in his use of that "we." It is really the royal "we," since he is running as an individual unconnected with any party. And in that fact lies the root of the problem of taking McCarthy seriously as a political figure or thinker. Is it conceivable that an individual detached from a "party" can or should become President of a country like this, running on a "platform" made of equal parts of charisma and nostalgia?

Apparently *The New Republic*, our contemporary (not, we would say, "colleague," since we do different work these days), can conceive of this odd circumstance. In a long essay in its September 25th issue, that magazine's editors do their best to make the case for McCarthy, in part by criticizing our skeptical analysis of what he is up to this year (*The Nation*, September 4). We called the McCarthy candidacy "frivolous" partly because of its deliberate avoidance of party organization, an essential part of a modern democratic system.

That does not mean that we embrace without question the current two parties. It certainly does not imply that we oppose efforts to establish other parties—*The Nation* in the past has supported both the Socialist Party of Norman Thomas and the La Follette Progressives. But McCarthy, in our opinion, is an extremely idiosyncratic and conservative politician who has chosen this year to run a solo campaign, one with no roots in this country's political soil. He will get nowhere except perhaps as a spoiler of the Democrats' chances, a role he clearly relishes. If that is not frivolity, what is?

As a footnote, we would add that *The New Republic* was wrong when it asserted that *The Nation*, in its criticism of McCarthy, was "addressing its own shrinking but passionate circulation." Passionate perhaps but definitely not shrinking—it could be that the *NR* confused its own circulation graph with that of *The Nation*.

'It Beggars Description'

United States Attorney Robert B. Fiske Jr., of the Southern District of New York, a top federal prosecutor, feels strongly that substantial jail sentences would deter businessmen from committing crimes. Most of the sentences now meted out to corporate executives are mild by comparison with those given other offenders; fines are the rule, even brief jail terms being rare. The theory behind such leniency is that a businessman's fall from respectability is in itself punishment more severe than a prison term. But Mr. Fiske is convinced that substantial jail sentences would be a much more effective de-

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terrent, if only because corporate executives may be assumed to stand in greater fear of prison than do street criminals. That may be true, but it does not necessarily follow that tougher sentences would reduce white-collar crime which, as he correctly points out, is "a very important problem."

A case in point involves executives at Grumman Aerospace Corp. Two years ago Federal District Judge Jack B. Weinstein sentenced thirty-five Grumman employees to jail terms and fines for a variety of kickback schemes. Recently he sentenced three more Grumman executives to jail terms of thirty, forty-five and sixty days, and fined each of them $10,000 for similar offenses. In passing sentence he said: "It beggars description and understanding to have people doing the same thing in the same form when I have been sentencing people to prison. I sent thirty people to jail. I fined a half-million dollars or more. It was all in the newspapers. And while I was doing that, the same thing was going on." He then went on to say that he was "frustrated by the fact that I'm sending people to jail to deter others and no one is paying attention." It is easy to understand his frustration.

We assume that the jail terms imposed in the first batch of cases were approximately the same as those in the second, but it is doubtful that even more stringent sentences would have been greater deterrents. One of the three executives recently sentenced told Judge Weinstein that he did not consider it criminal to have accepted $17,000 in cash and $3,000 in gifts while serving as supervisor of buyers for Grumman. "It's in the framework of the job. It came naturally." And Judge Weinstein agreed: "This is correct. We've come to the point in this country where no one is disturbed." Obviously the practice of accepting cash payoffs and gratuities was fairly common at Grumman, as indeed it is through many sectors of American industry today. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which can hardly be suspected of an anti-business bias, estimates improper payments to procurement agents and buyers at $3 billion annually, while a recent study by an expert in the field puts the total at $10 billion—minimum (*The New York Times*, March 16). Tougher sentences might be worth trying, if just for the novelty, but Judge Weinstein's experience would indicate that, once practices of this kind become accepted as part of "the framework of the job," even substantial jail sentences are not likely to deter them.

Already the anti-payoff campaign which the foreign bribery scandals aroused is sputtering out. "It's completely illusory to think anything will change," Jerry Levinson, chief counsel for a Congressional subcommittee investigating the problem, told a Conference Board seminar this summer (*The Wall Street Journal*, July 9): "Once the publicity has faded, many of these guys will go back to the same old philosophy of 'sell, sell, sell any way you can.' " One of the chairmen of the conference was asked what he thought of the government's anti-bribery drive and he replied: "A bunch of pip-squeak moralists running around trying to apply U.S. puritanical standards to other countries." Would he fire an executive for paying bribes abroad? "Hell, no! Why fire him for something he was paid to do?" As long as such attitudes prevail, tougher sentences are not likely to be imposed and, if they were, Mr. Fiske would probably soon share Judge Weinstein's frustration.

The NAACP on the Brink

This is an appeal to *Nation* readers to help prevent twelve white merchants in Port Gibson, Miss. and the reactionary court system of that state from putting the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People out of business. Unless the NAACP can raise several hundred thousand dollars immediately, it will be unable to post the extortionate bond that the legal system of Mississippi requires for an appeal of a judgment against the association of $1,250,699 arising out of a local business boycott by the black community of that small town, starting ten years ago.

This is an amazing and deeply disturbing case, a reminder of the dreadful state of race relations in that part of the country in the very recent past. Beginning in 1966, the blacks of rural Claiborne County (76 per cent of the population there) staged a boycott against the white merchants in Port Gibson. They sought the rights to vote, to have their share of jobs, for fair treatment that too many of us in other parts of the country assume were well won by the civil rights struggle of the 1960s and the federal laws that were then passed.

Twelve Port Gibson merchants brought an action for damages against the blacks, the thrust of their attack being aimed at the local NAACP. One of these merchants, a member of the state legislature, helped to push through a peculiar kind of antitrust statute which made it actionable for two or more persons to get together to "injure" another in his business. It is under that law, whose effect would be retroactive and which has yet received no serious test in the federal courts, that the NAACP was found guilty by a county court. Under another equally benighted Mississippi statute, the NAACP is required to put up 125 per cent of the judgment as a bond before it can even appeal.

What is at stake here is not just the fate of the NAACP. If these characters in rural Mississippi can get away with this unjustified punitive action against protesting groups, the way will be open for all kinds of harassment of, for instance, environmental and labor organizations. This would become one of the chilliest of the current chilling effects on the actions of individuals and groups in defense of their rights as they see them.

This Mississippi appeal by the NAACP is receiving the support of such organizations as the ACLU, the American Jewish Committee, the Congressional Black Caucus and the United Methodist Church, among others. It deserves the strong support of individual Americans as well. Pledges toward the appeal fund may be sent to the NAACP National Headquarters, 1790 Broadway, New York City, N.Y. 10019. Contributions can be made either in the form of a loan, repayable when the NAACP has successfully defended itself against the judgment—as in time it is virtually certain to do—or as a tax-deductible gift to the fund. But they should be made now; the need is urgent and immediate.

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MOTIVES FOR MURDER

WHY LETELIER DIED NOW

PETER WINN

The blood of Orlando Letelier has stained our Bicentennial celebration like an accusation and no public wringing of hands will absolve us from historical complicity in his murder. Two years after President Ford justified the Nixon administration's covert war against Salvador Allende as "in the best interest of the people of Chile and certainly in our own best interest," Allende's Ambassador to the United States is assassinated in downtown Washington, along with a young American, Ronni Moffitt. These killings represent the logical outcome of Kissinger's Chilean policy and symbolize its moral bankruptcy and murderous consequences.

The assassination of a distinguished political refugee in our capital city is in itself an outrage to our principles and a violation of our sovereignty, but the identity of the victim makes this crime particularly shocking. Orlando Letelier was neither a guerrilla leader nor a polemical demagogue. He was an urbane and humane scion of the Chilean upper class whose sympathy with the plight of the poor in his country and elsewhere in the Third World had led to a lifetime of selfless service, domestic and international, including ten years spent as an economist with the International Development Bank.

Politically, Letelier was a "Western European" Socialist, who believed in a democratic road to socialism, Chilean style. Although a personal friend of Salvador Allende and a member of his Socialist Party, he had always stood apart from the highly partisan and sectarian conflicts of Chilean politics. However, when Allende was elected President of Chile in 1970, Letelier answered the call of nation and party and accepted the delicate post of Ambassador to the United States. He served with distinction in Washington until July of 1973, when he was summoned back to a Chile torn by coup rumors and an undeclared civil war, to be Foreign Minister and then, in the last days of the Allende government, Defense Minister.

Letelier accepted these difficult tasks with the same understated courage with which he later endured the year of harsh treatment in an Antarctic prison camp after Pinochet's coup of September 11, 1973. Released two years ago as a result of international pressure, Letelier returned to Washington to teach at American University and become a member of the independent Institute for Policy Studies and, recently, director of its foreign policy affiliate, the Transnational Institute. At the time of his death, he was working on a study of the "new international economic order," which would distribute more equitably the world's wealth.

A political moderate, a gifted economist and diplomat, a splendid administrator and a deeply humane person who in a recent conversation rejected revenge and spoke only of an end to the junta's inhumanity, Letelier was also a devastatingly effective critic of the junta's repressive politics and regressive economics, as his recent article in *The Nation* (August 28) demonstrated. His personal charm and diplomatic talents, together with the contacts he had developed during fifteen years in Washington, made him the ideal United States "ambassador" for the exiled Chilean Left. These qualities, as well as his distance from the bitter partisan politics of the Allende era, also made Letelier a key figure in the efforts to form a broad front of the Center-Left, from the Christian Democrats to the Socialists, which could claim to represent the overwhelming majority of Chileans when it pressed for the ouster of the junta. Moreover, this combination of qualities identified Orlando Letelier as a future leader of a democratic Chile. In short, he was a dangerous threat to the junta's continued misrule, and a logical target for the DINA, the dreaded Chilean secret police.

If this explains why Orlando Letelier was on the junta's death list, his growing political prominence and success as "ambassador-in-exile," along with the political moment in the United States, account for the timing of his assassination. In addition to *The Nation* article, he contributed to *The New York Times* an Op-Ed piece (published posthumously on September 27) and had been approached by Pantheon for a book on his experiences. Eleven days before his death, he had been the keynote speaker to a sold-out benefit for Chile at the Felt Forum, New York City. A recent meeting in New York of leading Christian Democrats with Christian Socialists who had supported Allende was a major step toward the unity of democratic forces in opposition to the junta for which Letelier had worked since his release from prison.

Orlando Letelier had also become increasingly successful in his determination to restrict the flow of foreign aid and investment to the junta's Chile. During the past year, U.S. military aid and sales to Chile were eliminated by Congress and the amount of economic aid progressively restricted. Letelier's role in blocking a $63-million Dutch investment in Chilean mining was specifically cited in the decree depriving him of Chilean nationality which preceded and presaged his execution.

But political events in the United States, not economic decisions in Holland, were what sealed Letelier's fate. Henry Kissinger and William Simon had assured Pinochet of American support as long as Gerald Ford was in the White House, requiring in return only the gesture of releasing a handful of political prisoners, who were more than replaced by new arrests.

The junta is terrified of a Democratic victory in November and the accession of a President with a strong stand on human rights and with advisers whose anti-junta views are well known. Letelier had close ties to leading Demo-

Peter Winn is a Tinker Fellow at Columbia University's Institute of Latin American Studies. His article on Chile in The Nation *(November 8, 1975) won the Latin American Studies Association award for Distinguished Scholarly Contribution to Public Understanding of Latin America.*

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Bas, Tachydromos (Greece)

crats, and would have become an increasingly formidable opponent in the capital of the country upon whose support the junta depends for survival. Moreover, Letelier had identified American bank loans and aid funneled through multilateral channels—the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank—as vital forms of assistance to the junta which evaded Congressional cutoffs. He was campaigning for their restriction, and there was a possibility that Congress might plug that loophole. Significantly, his assassination coincided with the arrival in Washington of Pinochet's Finance Minister, Jorge Cauas, seeking new loans from the International Monetary Fund. In short, Orlando Letelier was killed because he was beginning to succeed—in unifying the Chilean exiles, in stopping aid and investment, in creating an anti-junta atmosphere in Washington, particularly among people likely to be influential in a Democratic administration.

He was not the first Chilean leader in exile to be marked for murder. Two years ago in Buenos Aires, Gen. Carlos Prats, who had been Allende's army chief and had ties to dissident officers appalled by the consequences of their own coup, was killed in another car bombing. Last year at this time, gunmen in Rome seriously wounded Bernardo Leighton, a Christian Democrat who bridged the differences between Left and Center and linked Chilean exiles to both the Vatican and European Christian Democrats. These three men had in common their leadership of important opposition sectors, their influence with groups that could threaten the junta's survival and their dominant positions in a broad-based movement to restore democracy in Chile. At the same time, the murder of such illustrious opposition leaders serves to intimidate Chilean dissidents abroad into passivity and silence, and hamstrings their attempts to isolate the junta internationally and deny it the foreign aid and investment upon which its economic strategy depends.

These three murderous attacks, moreover, are the most notorious incidents of the terror that pervades the activities of the junta, as the DINA extends its Gestapo tactics beyond the borders of Chile. In the hemisphere's southern cone, regular meetings of the secret police of Chile, Argentina and Uruguay, together with a reported computerization and pooling of their political files, have converted the Latin American tradition of political asylum

The following letter, of which The Nation *received a copy, was sent on September 23 to Secretary of State Kissinger and to Attorney General Levi by the undersigned members of the Department of Romance Languages and Literature, the University of Washington, Seattle. We publish it both for its own merit and as an example of the citizen action called for by Peter Winn in the adjoining article.*

On the morning of September 21, 1976, Orlando Letelier, a distinguished Chilean economist and political figure, was assassinated by a bomb planted in his car in Washington, D.C. Also victims of this crime were two North Americans, Mr. and Mrs. Moffitt, one of whom was killed and the other critically injured. . . .

Mr. Letelier is not the first prominent Chilean to die by assassination in exile. General Carlos Prats and his wife, in exile in Argentina, were killed by a bomb in their car in Buenos Aires two years ago. Bernardo Leighton, a distinguished member of the Chilean Christian Democrats and one of its former presidents, in exile in Italy, was badly injured by an assassination attempt on his life in Rome one year ago. More recently, Pascal Allende, nephew of the late President Allende, has been the target of at least one assassination attempt in Costa Rica.

If we add to these cases the numerous death threats that have been directed toward other prominent Chileans in exile, such as S. Gabriel Valdez and Armando Uribe Arce, it seems clear that the brutal criminality of the fascist military junta of Chile is operating on an international scale and has penetrated the United States.

In the context of President Ford's public confession of the U.S. involvement in the destabilization program that led to the overthrow of Chile's constitutional government and to the assassination of President Salvador Allende, we hold our government accountable for crimes perpetrated both within and outside of Chile by the present military regime. We demand a full investigation into the assassination of Orlando Letelier and we strongly urge that our government withdraw all military and economic aid and diplomatic recognition from Chile until democratic institutions and respect for human life and human rights have been once again restored to that country.

With great concern,

Marcelino Penuelas, Michael P. Predmore, Rodney Bodden, Marie C. Daniels, Robert J. Ellrich, Cecilia A. Cartwright, Sol Saporta

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into a fatal trap for refugees caught in a regionalization of repression.

After the recent military coup in Argentina, Chilean political refugees began to disappear while in the hands of Argentine authorities; some were turned over to the DINA, others were kidnapped and killed by rightist terrorists commonly believed to be secret police agents. Even U.N. refugee hostels have been subject to these raids, while Chileans exiled elsewhere in Latin America have received death threats and experienced increasing harassment. The DINA is reported to have established its headquarters for South America in Paraguay and for Europe in Madrid, using Chile's diplomatic missions as cover.

Orlando Letelier was the first, but will not be the last, Chilean refugee to be assassinated in the United States—unless we demonstrate to the junta that such crimes do not pay. It is the duty of American citizens to demand a thorough investigation—by the FBI, the Congress and the press—of Letelier's murder, an investigation that would strip away the junta's new public relations façade of cosmetic changes and lay bare the web of terror the DINA is spreading beyond Chile's frontiers.

Going further, Americans must take up Letelier's campaign to deny the junta economic and diplomatic support. As his *Nation* article demonstrated, Pinochet's pariah regime is heavily dependent upon the United States for such support. We should end *all* aid to the junta—bilateral and multilateral, military and economic. It is high time that our tax dollars stopped being used to keep afloat regimes which stand opposed to everything in which we claim to believe.

It is also time for the American electorate to reject a foreign policy which destabilizes democratic governments led by humane reformers and supports totalitarian dictatorships which terrorize and impoverish their populations. The murder of Orlando Letelier and Ronni Moffitt reveals where that policy of conservative *Realpolitik* leads. Two years after President Ford's assurances to the contrary, it is all too clear that this policy is neither in "the best interest of the people of Chile" nor "in our own best interest." It is time to change that policy by changing the policy makers and pressing their successors to honor campaign promises of a broader definition of the national interest and a foreign policy of principle. □

WORSE THAN AN ERROR

KISSINGER'S AFRICAN MISCHIEF

IMMANUEL WALLERSTEIN

Henry Kissinger says he went to southern Africa to seek a peaceful solution. Whatever his claims, he has dangerously escalated the level of conflict there and has set the United States on a road that is likely to lead within a few years to sending troops to South Africa, there to fight on the side of its white government against its Black majority and perhaps against neighboring African governments as well. Kissinger's mission is more than a gamble or an error in judgment; it is a negative act which should be opposed outright by anyone who purports to stand for majority rule in southern Africa.

This, however, is not an *ad hominem* argument. I am not calling Mr. Kissinger a bad apple in an otherwise fine barrel. His actions are merely an *escalation* of long-standing American policy toward Africa, an escalation that, if not inevitable, was predictable; in fact many of us have been predicting it for some time.

First let me clear up some phony issues. It is not a matter of whether or not "race war" can be prevented, or a "peaceful solution" found. The war, whatever one wants to designate it, began long ago and in a serious way. And *all* solutions are by definition peaceful. If Messrs. Vorster and Smith were to announce tomorrow that they favor one man, one vote, the solution would be peaceful. Asking whether a "peaceful solution" can be found really means: will the African majority be willing to accept something less than their rights—"peacefully"? And the answer is no, *for which we should all be grateful.* Every time, anywhere, people defend their rights, the rest of us are better off.

A second phony issue is Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Namibia. The peoples of these countries are oppressed and struggling to be free, but they are not what brings our Secretary of State to southern Africa. The name of the game is *South* Africa, and Mr. Kissinger hasn't breathed a whisper about doing anything about majority rule there. The reason is very simple. Zimbabwe and Namibia are, for Kissinger and Vorster, the ballast to be thrown overboard to save the sinking ship of South Africa—and to save it more or less as it is.

To see where we are today, we must go back as far as 1940. The United States "assumed its world responsibilities" on a very simple principle. It did *not* decide to become the world's policeman, as an oversimplified rhetoric would have it; it decided to police its own world interests, whenever and wherever somebody else could no longer do the job as Washington wanted it to be done.

The United States entered Europe when France and Britain could no longer handle it; that was in 1940. It entered Southeast Asia in 1954 when France was forced to retire. It entered the Middle East when Britain could no longer handle it after 1956 and escalated that intervention when Israel was outpaced in 1973. In each of these cases, "entering" meant more than expressing some political concern with developments in the particular

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region. It meant assuming the *principal* responsibility for the West's *tactical* decisions.

Before 1940, the United States had assumed tactical responsibilities only in Latin America and to some degree in East Asia. Of all the regions of the world, the one which required least direct responsibility was Africa. Thus, it has often been said that the United States had no interest in Africa and no policy toward Africa. That was not true, but at least up to 1960 the United States felt, correctly, that its interests were, by and large, well-protected by the tactical decisions of the four major colonial powers (Great Britain, France, Belgium and Portugal), plus South Africa.

That does not mean that the U.S. Government approved every policy of every colonial government. It means that, overall, nothing was seriously enough wrong from a U.S. point of view to warrant *direct* intervention. Now and then, the United States would make quiet suggestions about "changes"; these were most often ignored. Now and then, spokesmen for the administration in office would make a public declaration of liberal ideology which no one took seriously, as well they ought not to have done. But that was it. Otherwise the motto was: hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil.

What changed this quiet content? As usual in history, the complacency of the powerful was undone by the refusal of the oppressed to acquiesce. The "peaceful" decolonization of Africa "downward," that is from north to south, had been launched well enough by Great Britain and France in the 1950s. Things got a bit sticky for France because of Algeria, but General de Gaulle got the train back on the track. The political objective was simple. The claims of the African middle classes to local political power and a share in the world economic pie would be granted in return for two things: no substantial change in the nature of economic ties to the Western world, and internal policing by these middle classes of their potentially radical peasants and workers.

Although one or two of the new African governments were a bit rambunctious (notably Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana and Sékou Touré's Guinea), the "peaceful transfer of power" was seen by Great Britain, France *and* the United States as a splendid success—until July 1960, when the newly independent Congo/Leopoldville, now Zaïre, "exploded."

The Congo exploded for two reasons: Belgium, which was running the tactical show, had no previous experience with decolonization and made fearful errors. But even more important, for the first time decolonization had touched the "sensitive" zone of southern Africa. It was like a dentist finally getting near the nerve.

The Congo was part of Africa's mineral-rich area and it had a significant contingent of white settlers. Of course, it could have been "decolonized" without danger to Western political and economic interests; Britain's successful operation just four years later in Zambia—also mineral-rich and with settlers—proved it could be done. But the Belgians lacked Britain's acquired talents. So in the Congo, Katanga "seceded" and Patrice Lumumba ran around aggressively asserting Congolese interests and actually dared to ask the Russians for some transport planes to fly his troops into Katanga to put down the Belgian-protected rebel forces. Panic bells rang in Washington, London, Lisbon and Pretoria. And the United States stepped in.

It took the United States—operating both directly and via the United Nations—four to five years to pull the chestnuts out of the fire. But in 1964, United States (not

Peterson, Vancouver Sun (Canada)

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Russian) transport planes flew Belgian paratroopers to jump near Stanleyville (now Kisangani) and join South African mercenaries already on the ground. Together, they liquidated the National Liberation Council, the heirs of Lumumba's nationalist movement.

The fact that an American ambassador was at that very moment negotiating in Nairobi with the NLC's Foreign Minister, Thomas Kanza, under the auspices of Kenya's President Jomo Kenyatta and the Organization of African Unity, didn't seem to make anyone in Washington blanch. When the Japanese pulled much the same thing before Pearl Harbor in 1941, Franklin Roosevelt called it "a day that will live in infamy." But what is infamous when done by Japanese to Americans is "humanitarian" when done by Americans to Congolese.

In any case, U.S. intervention worked. Within two more years General Mobutu was securely ensconced in the Congo, Nkrumah was ousted in Ghana and Ben Bella in Algeria, and the Angolan revolution ground to a temporary halt. From the point of view of African liberation, the decade from 1964 to 1974 was ten long years of frustration, stagnation, and a deteriorating status quo. The United States had done what needed to be done in the Congo and could leave Angola to the Portuguese, Zimbabwe to the British, Namibia to the South Africans, and everyone else to the local boys.

The spurt of Kennedy liberalism—a vote here and there denouncing the Portuguese at the United Nations; some scholarships to political refugees—died down. Mr. Johnson was preoccupied with Vietnam and the Dominican Republic. Mr. Nixon began to consider even more open support of the white regimes in southern Africa with National Security Staff Memorandum 39 (a product of Mr. Kissinger's staff).

What a shock it was, then, on April 25, 1974, when the Portuguese Government fell—or rather crumbled from within as the result of a decade of patient, painful corrosion of its power and internal legitimacy by the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau, the MPLA in Angola, and FRELIMO in Mozambique. Despite prescient warnings from General Spínola and others, the United States was caught unawares.

It took the United States, with Vietnam and Watergate on its mind, about sixteen months to realize how far things had gotten out of hand, and to comprehend that the new "reformed" Portuguese Government would be unable to arrange one of those harmless little decolonizations in Angola. When Kissinger did finally wake up, it was too late. The United States tried to do something in Angola, directly and via South Africa, but it was abortive.

The alarm bells went off again—both in Washington and in Pretoria—as they had in the summer of 1960. It took four to six years of hard work last time to get Africa back under Western control. Can it be done again? Not as likely, but neither Mr. Kissinger nor Mr. Vorster are the kind to give up easily.

Of the two, Vorster is the more knowledgeable and the more suave. He is also the more desperate. He has seen the menace of revolution coming for a long time now, even before Portugal's collapse. And he has been trying to head it off by "détente." To understand the Kissinger mission one must know what Vorster meant by détente.

Pending the ability of the oppressed Black majority to shake the regime from within, independent nations had been trying to undermine South Africa's international legitimacy and respectability by formal condemnations and practical isolation. Hence they sought to pass resolutions in the U.N. and to achieve diplomatic, economic and cultural boycotts. Bit by bit, this was working. The United Nations passed ever more militant resolutions and more and more Western nations voted for them. An arms embargo was theoretically enacted under international law. Diplomatic, transport and economic ties were broken, at least by most Third World and Socialist countries. One after another, international sports organizations barred South Africa from participation.

All this involved only pinpricks in material terms, since arms flowed in anyway, and trade and industry flourished, thanks to open and covert Western cooperation. But the moral isolation was beginning to have its effect—on the morale of the white regime, on the collective consciousness of the Black majority, and on "liberal public opinion" in the West.

From 1964 to 1974, the international anti-apartheid campaign represented a growing bother to the regime. It wasn't a crisis, but to sophisticated analysts (including Vorster), it boded no good. The way to handle a campaign to de-legitimize a regime is to launch a counter-campaign to re-legitimize it. This was Vorster's "détente." The idea was to get at first tacit, then open, support for "normal" relations between independent African nations and white South Africa.

Vorster started with the easy states—weak neighboring countries with conservative regimes: Malawi, Lesotho, Swaziland. Then he started after bigger fish among the ex-French colonies: the Malagasy Republic, the Ivory Coast, Gabon. He was working his way to still bigger fish like Zaïre, Zambia and Kenya. And somewhere out on the horizon, he hoped maybe Nigeria could be persuaded to join the list.

It must be said that Vorster was a very prudent and patient fisherman and he was doing quite well. To be sure, he had behind-the-scenes backing from Paris, London and Washington; but he was making the decisions. He had even been involved *since 1966* in a quiet effort to decolonize Rhodesia. He couldn't say this too loudly, since his own voters were not sophisticated enough to understand the tactic, but Harold Wilson knew what was going on, and so did Ian Smith.

Vorster was a good enough tactician that even the Portuguese coup did not slow him down. He was in fact merely emboldened to try to draw Mozambique into the net. What undid Mr. Vorster therefore was nothing he did or failed to do. Vorster was undone by Kissinger's false start in Angola. Nothing is worse in war and politics than starting an aggressive action and not going through with it. Kissinger started to overthrow the MPLA in Angola in the summer of 1975, persuaded the normally more prudent South Africans to commit their troops to

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sustain UNITA, and then pulled back. Nothing as disastrous as that had happened to the West since the Suez operation of 1956.

And Vorster had to pay the cost. The carefully constructed emergent arrangements for "détente" were suddenly abandoned by many of the prospective adherents. Even worse, the war of liberation that had been underway since 1966 in Zimbabwe and Namibia finally spread into South Africa itself. Readers of *The New York Times* commenced to hear of Soweto, and Soweto turned out to be only the start of a continuing and organized action.

Mr. Vorster said to Mr. Kissinger: do something. You undid years of my careful planning. And there's no time to lose. It was at this point, and only then, that Kissinger began to engage in "shuttle diplomacy." When for the first time the South African regime was seriously and imminently threatened from within, the United States "entered" the region—not to achieve a "peaceful solution" but, quite the opposite, to struggle to contain the movement for African liberation.

The scheme is very simple. (*1*) Dump the Rhodesian whites quickly. Buy them off. These whites stole the land from the Africans, and made a handsome profit for twenty-five to seventy-five years on the stolen property and underpaid African labor. But never mind. Use some U.S. taxpayers' money to reward these whites one last time; give them a hefty start on their new life in Canada or Argentina. (None of them would want to go to Britain; the standard of living there is too low.) (*2*) Create a puppet independent state in Namibia with a large political role for the white settlers, and a semi-permanent invitation to the South African armed forces to station troops there. (*3*) Do a minor cosmetic job in South Africa, eliminating so-called "petty apartheid." Buy off the Coloureds (those of "mixed" ancestry). (*4*) Get international recognition for Transkei, a Bantustan scheduled to become "independent" this year. Thus, set the stage for the ultimate partition of South Africa with the 20 per cent of whites retaining 80 per cent of the land area (including all the mines and factories). (*5*) Re-legitimize Vorster and the white regime by getting the so-called "front-line Presidents" (Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia, Botswana and Angola) to meet with Vorster and "trade" the rights of Blacks in South Africa for concessions to Blacks in Zimbabwe and Namibia.

It is this noble program that President Ford is presenting to the American voters as a great contribution to world peace. It is this noble program that Carter and Mondale and Senator Clark (the official Democratic "liberal" on southern Africa) are afraid to criticize. They all wish Kissinger well. And if they come into office, do they propose to do more of the same?

The United States is in southern Africa now in a big way. Vorster no longer is in tactical command. No doubt he liked it better before. But U.S. tactical leadership is a price he has had to pay to preserve privilege for his voters. And he is a sensible man. Kissinger's mission is a setback for the liberation movements. They know it, and are saying so loudly. The "front-line Presidents" know it too. But the United States can wield a mighty big stick when it wants to, and they are being careful.

Just recently I went down to Washington to participate in a conference called by the Methodist Church on southern Africa. At lunchtime a lot of Congressmen showed up and I happened to be sitting across from a rather prominent liberal Republican Senator. He asked me what the conferees thought of Mr. Kissinger's mission. I told him not much, and I explained why. He then asked me that old liberal question: "What can the United States do to make sure that it doesn't end up this time on the side of the wrong people?" I gave him the only answer I know: Get on the side of the right people. □

THE POLITICS OF CYNICISM

MANIPULATING THE MIAs

ROBERT K. MUSIL

To appreciate the deep cynicism of the Ford administration's recent threat to veto admission of Vietnam to the U.N. over the question of Americans missing in action, two things must be kept in mind. First, that the importance of the MIA issue was first contrived as a propaganda weapon early in the tenure of Richard Nixon and has always been a deeply political question, not a simple humanitarian one as the United States would portray it. Second, that despite all the hoopla about "accounting," the exact fate of most of the American air crews and other servicemen missing after the war will never be known, whatever the Vietnamese do or fail to do.

Taking the second point first, if and when progress is finally made on accounting for the 795 American MIAs and in locating the remains of another 1,000 or so Americans who died in Vietnam, little more will be discovered than is currently known. On January 28, 1974, at Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings on U.S. Prisoners of War and MIAs in Southeast Asia, Dr. Roger Shields, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Economic Affairs, the chief Pentagon official directly concerned with MIA affairs, explained that there can never be a full accounting. "We have never promised families a complete accounting in the sense that we would know what happened to any single individual. This is impossible—we believe in a

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number of cases no information concerning our men will ever be forthcoming despite access to these areas." These views were echoed recently by Frank Sieverts, chief State Department official on MIA matters. Or, as Rep. Paul McCloskey (R., Calif.), a member of the House Select Committee on MIAs put it starkly, "No one has the guts to tell these people there's no *rational* basis to believe that any of these men is still alive."

Indeed, past American history backs up these statements. After World War II, 35,000 American servicemen were listed as missing in action and to this day the fate of nearly 2,000 of them has not been determined. Similarly, after the Korean War around 5,000 Americans were listed as missing and some 1,000 of these have never been "accounted" for. The unfortunate reality after Vietnam is that the exact fate of most Americans listed as missing (though far less than in previous wars) will never be known. No amount of administration manipulation of MIA sentiment or demands for "full accounting" will provide information on fliers shot down years ago over the rugged terrain of Indochina.

No war is quite like any other war, of course, and it is hard to measure the casualties of one against any other, given the different numbers of combatants, the duration of the fighting, the composition of the forces engaged, and the nature of the combat itself. But it is generally agreed by those who have studied the history of the war in Indochina that the proportion of American MIAs that resulted from our intervention there was extraordinarily small by any standard of measurement. The political exploitation of those truly "lost" in combat is therefore all the harder to understand or to tolerate.

The mere fact that 82 per cent of the American MIAs in Vietnam were members of air combat crews tells a great deal—it was, of course, impossible to know whether a pilot or crew member was killed by the weapon which downed a plane over territory our forces did not control. Some Air Force squadron commanders used to boast that they never reported one of their men as killed in action, even if the plane was seen to be blown to bits in the air and no parachute opened. The theory was that the families of these casualties would be better off if they continued to receive his pay, though death benefits have been raised to a point where this is at least a doubtful proposition.

A staff member of the House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia, which has collected great volumes of data on the MIAs, says that of the first fifty-three cases the committee looked into, forty still carried by the Pentagon as MIAs should clearly have been listed as killed in action. He describes the official MIA figures as "amazingly . . . ridiculously" small, in the light of the nature of the fighting in Vietnam and adds that the figures are, in any case, "highly inflated."

Thus the reality of the situation confirms the cynicism of using the MIAs for domestic political purposes. Just as pro-war demonstrations by hard-hats were stimulated by the Nixon White House in an attempt to counter massive anti-war protests, so the POW/MIA issue was deliberately agitated by Republican administrations. Over the years, the prime lobby for POW/MIAs has been the League of Families of American Prisoners of War and Missing in Action in Southeast Asia. The league was launched in 1969, with a constitution written by Charles Havens III, a former Department of Defense lawyer, and it operated from the start in close cooperation with the Nixon administration and the Pentagon. Each of the armed services helped recruit members of the league through newsletters they put out about the missing. League members were flown by the military to "nonpartisan" events around the country and added an effective human touch to pro-war propaganda.

Any belief that the league was nonpartisan and purely humanitarian was dispelled on January 21, 1972 when Rep. Les Aspin (D., Wis.) put documents in the *Congressional Record* that revealed a working relationship between the league and the Republican National Committee. In a letter of April 14, 1971, Joan M. Vinson, then RNC national coordinator, had informed the league's board members that Robert P. Odell, finance chairman of the National Committee, had secretly made available to the league lists of donors to the Republican Party and had arranged for a mail-order firm to conduct a fund-raising appeal for the group. "Most importantly," Vinson added, "no one will know that we are using the lists owned by the Republican National Committee."

In addition to abetting the league, the administration, with the help of sympathetic backers like H. Ross Perot, the Texas electronics executive and founder of United We Stand, organized "Tell it to Hanoi" campaigns, mounted displays about POWs for tourists to see in Congress, and sent astronaut Frank Borman on a worldwide tour as the President's special envoy on POW/MIA matters. Against this rather transparent background, Nixon, like his chosen successor President Ford, attempted to play nonpartisan and "Presidential" while using the POW/MIAs to gain support for his election and for his war policies. Thus, on October 16, 1972, just before the election, and before the terror bombing of Hanoi and the Paris agreement that followed, Nixon made a "Presidential" appearance before the League of Families. Disavowing any intention to make the POW/MIAs a mere election issue, Nixon then proceeded incredibly to thank the league for its support of his bombing of Hanoi and mining of Haiphong in May, denounced amnesty as the "most immoral thing I could think of," and vowed never to "abandon our POWs and our MIAs."

Accordingly, the American concern about MIAs, which in itself was a natural humanitarian sentiment, was written into Article 8b of that consummately political document, the Paris agreement, to end hostilities in Vietnam. From that moment on, the MIA question has been inextricably linked legally and morally to other postwar issues. Article 8b provides that the two sides will "help each other get information about those military personnel and foreign civilians of the parties missing in action, to determine the location and take care of the graves of the dead so as to facilitate the exhumation and repatriation of the remains, and to take any such other measures as may be required. . . ." The Nixon-Ford administrations have, since the signing of the agreement, tried to use 8b as a propaganda flail, while ignoring other parts of the agreement. On Armed Forces

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Day in May 1973, Nixon again pledged support for the MIAs in a speech at Norfolk Navy Base: "Just as America never broke faith with our prisoners of war, I can assure you today we will never break faith with our missing in action." Two weeks later Sen. Robert Dole (R., Kan.) and other Nixon war supporters were using Nixon's remarks to argue for the continued bombing of Cambodia. Meanwhile, the United States continued to pay for General Thieu's military violations of the Paris agreement and studiously ignored the implementation of Article 8c (the release of political prisoners) and Article 21 (reconstruction aid). [See "Politics and the MIAs: What the White House Hides," by Stephen S. Rosenfeld, *The Nation,* February 23, 1974.]

The war in Vietnam was finally settled on the battlefield to North Vietnamese advantage and without the full implementation of the Paris agreement, including the MIAs and reconstruction aid. Since then, the policies pursued by President Ford and Secretary Kissinger seem guided more by pique than by diplomacy. The administration has refused to discuss aid or normalization of relations between the two countries and has twice vetoed the application of North and South Vietnam for admission to the United Nations without mentioning the MIAs. Then, a few weeks ago, continuing in the Nixon tradition, President Ford dragged out the MIA issue as an excuse to threaten a Security Council veto of the newly united Socialist Republic of Vietnam's application.

Just how closely Ford's name was related to election year politics can be seen from the circumstances surrounding his rejection of the latest Vietnamese gesture of good will. On September 6, Hanoi released the names of twelve American pilots who had been killed in the war but were until then listed as missing. Standing in the White House Rose Garden on September 7 and acting "Presidential," candidate Ford denounced the release of the names, saying "it is callous and cruel to exploit human suffering in the hope of diplomatic advantage." At the same time, a White House spokesman admitted that Ford had been aware that Governor Carter was about to meet with MIA families. Then, on September 13, President Ford directed U.N. Ambassador William Scranton to veto Vietnam's forthcoming application. Ambassador Scranton assured the media that the veto would be based solely on the "brutal and inhumane treatment of the families of Americans not accounted for" and that "politics played no part in the decision."

This assertion was quickly discredited when the French Government moved to postpone the discussion of Vietnam's admission to the U.N. until after the U.S. elections and revealed that the move was being made in accordance with a request that had come from Secretary Kissinger a full week before the Ford announcement. Thus, the entire MIA-U.N. admission flap could have been avoided by the administration, except that it obviously felt a political gain could be had by announcing a veto that would, at least for the present, be needed.

United States callousness on the MIA issue was further underscored when the Foreign Minister of Vietnam released confidential diplomatic notes on the question dating back to March 26. The exchange showed that Vietnam had taken the initiative in seeking to resolve outstanding issues, that the United States had not replied to an August 27th note agreeing to a meeting place, and that the release of twelve names had been a goodwill gesture in the context of negotiations.

The U.S. response, then, of denouncing the release of names and threatening a U.N. veto followed an old pattern of what Cora Weiss, former head of the U.S. Committee of Liaison to Vietnam, and now director of Friendshipment, a coalition of peace groups seeking normalization of relations with Vietnam, calls "a setup for rejection." As far back as 1971, Weiss contends, the U.S. raid on a POW camp at Sontay that was known to be empty was in response to the Vietnamese release of

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purge with special targets being made of Jews and other "rootless cosmopolitan" intellectuals. All over Eastern Europe, democrats, especially democratic socialists, were being imprisoned or executed. In 1948, the "nonaggressive" Soviet Union sponsored the coup that ended Czech democracy and blockaded West Berlin.

It is difficult today to comprehend the extent to which one's attitude toward the Soviet Union and its practices was of decisive importance in the formulation of one's general political outlook during the late 1940s. Between those who were still sympathetic to the Soviet Union and those who had come to believe it to be a monstrous tyranny there was a wide political gulf. The bitterness of this split made it impossible for many liberals to find the campaign of Wallace worthy of their support or Wallace himself worthy of their respect. . . . *Peter Connolly*

the high-test hazard

New Haven, Conn.

I wish as a practicing pediatrician to support wholeheartedly Dorothy Noyes Kane's comments in *The Air Children Breathe* [*The Nation,* Aug. 28]. Lead is all about us; more than 4 million tons are released annually into the world's atmosphere. Ninety per cent at least stems from automobile exhausts.

Current thinking of pediatricians and health officials, as portrayed by a statement of the Center for Disease Control of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, "Increased Lead Absorption and Lead Poisoning in Young Children" (March 1975), is that a blood lead level of more than 30 micrograms per 100 cc's of blood . . . if uninterrupted, can lead to serious toxic encephalopathy at the extreme, and anemia, restlessness, lethargy and mild neurologic disability at lower levels of concentration.

It is disheartening that the federal regulations of 1973 intended to reduce lead in gasoline . . . are unenforced because the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's efforts are being challenged and blocked by the gasoline manufacturers. Fortunately, a June 14th decision of the Supreme Court refusing to review a District of Columbia court's ruling in favor of the United States EPA's authority to regulate gasoline contents allows this agency to begin again to perform its legally assigned task of enforcing federal regulations aimed at protecting the health of vast numbers of American children.

Lead poisoning is a preventable disease. To ignore the presence of this disease is inconsistent with our responsibility to our children and to future generations.

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the names of twenty-one downed fliers. "My husband Peter was in Vietnam at the time of the raid and the diversionary bombing surrounding it," she explains with a touch of bitterness, "and Laird [Melvin Laird, then Secretary of Defense] knew it and actually chuckled about it." What the U.S. fails to mention on the MIA issue, says Weiss, is that "Vietnam has made it clear by establishing a task force that it is working to clear up the status of the missing and has demonstrated that with periodic releases of names and bodies."

D. Gareth Porter of the Indochina Resource Center in Washington, who visited Vietnam last January as a special staffer for the House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia, agrees. Despite tremendous difficulties on their side after the war, the Vietnamese "have made great efforts and shown gestures of good will on the question of American MIAs," as they claimed in their September 13th communiqué. Porter cites the Vietnamese establishment of an Agency for Search for MIAs and the release of the bodies of three American pilots to the House Select Committee in December 1975 as just two instances of Vietnamese overtures. Porter also feels that the Vietnamese domestic situation is misunderstood in this country. "The Vietnamese Government also has the public opinion of its own people to contend with," he says. "The Vietnamese people expected reconstruction aid after the signing of the Paris agreement and would be angry if the government gave top priority to MIA searches when no aid had been provided."

Such attempts to portray the Vietnamese as other than devils on the MIA question and to recognize the extent of American disapproval of the U.S. position on the missing have gotten little attention in the established U.S. press. *The New York Times* editorialized on September 15 that it was "of course unconscionable for Hanoi to continue to withhold whatever information it has on the missing Americans. . . . All Americans agree on that, whatever their differences about the Vietnamese War or about the importance of trying to establish normal relations." Despite what the *Times* says, not "all Americans" agree with the government's separation of the MIA issue from other postwar issues. John McAuliff of the American Friends Service Committee coordinates a nationwide "Appeal for Reconciliation" that will attempt to persuade President Ford, or President Carter if he is elected, that a significant body of Americans is concerned with all postwar issues. The "Appeal," now being circulated, is part of the attempt of coalitions involving more than sixty peace, church and civil liberties groups to gain reconstruction aid for Vietnam, normalization of relations, a complete amnesty for all American war resisters, and adequate rehabilitation for wounded veterans. McAuliff believes that many Americans understand the Vietnamese view that the MIA question is only one of a number of crucial, outstanding issues left over from the war. When asked about President Ford's position on the MIAs (a position that candidate Carter hastened to point out he agreed with), McAuliff replied that "it is obvious that they are both motivated by what they see as short-term political gain, and that they believe there is more pressure from an anti-Vietnam coalition than the other way around. One of the purposes of the Appeal for Reconciliation is to show, on the contrary, that there is wide support in favor of a position of U.S. moral responsibility toward Vietnam."

Of course, the families of those missing deserve to know as much as possible about the fate of their relatives and to have their suffering relieved. But from the recent exchanges on the MIA question, it appears once again that the American Government, not the Vietnamese, is preventing that result. And, tragically, when an MIA accounting is finally made in the context of full implementation of the Paris agreement, such information as will be forthcoming is certain—given the nature of the war in Vietnam and the record of previous wars—to be both grim and extremely slim. □

NO TO THE 'PEACEFUL' ATOM

SWEDEN'S NUCLEAR ELECTION

ROBERT SKOLE

Stockholm

For the first time in any national Parliamentary election, nuclear energy was the major issue which last month defeated the Social Democratic Party of Sweden after forty-four uninterrupted years in office. Across the country, Center Party campaign posters, reading "No to nuclear energy—yes to safe, secure energy sources," told voters what controversy it was that most distinctly separated the parties. And in all their election speeches, Social Democratic politicians warned the public that, if the Center Party were to carry out its campaign promises after the September 19th election, industrial growth and employment would be threatened by lack of energy.

The Center Party, originally an agrarian party, is the largest of the three non-Socialist parties opposed to the Social Democrats. It held about 25 per cent of the seats in the last Parliament. Its leader, 50-year-old pipe-smoking sheep farmer, Thorbjörn Fälldin, is expected to be the Prime Minister in a coalition government. Fälldin's party staked its future on popular concern for the environment. It was obviously a good issue in Sweden, where the "environment debate" started back in the early 1960s, when a valued species of eagle was seriously threatened by mercury. In more recent years, nuclear energy has been the focus of environmentalist attention, and the "nuclear debate" has gone on longer and more heatedly here than in any European country.

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The first plank in the Center Party platform, adopted at the start of the election campaign this summer, called for halting the Swedish nuclear power program. Fälldin said he would start planning to shut down the five nuclear units now in operation, stop work on five units under construction, and abandon an additional three units that have been approved by Parliament.

The Social Democratic government got support in 1975 from the Liberal and Conservative Parties for the present Swedish nuclear and energy program, a program that called for adding two nuclear units to the eleven already approved at the time, and for major efforts to reduce energy consumption so that by the early 1990s Sweden would have zero growth in energy consumption. The program also included a small expansion of Sweden's hydroelectric power (which cannot be significantly extended without great environmental damage), research into alternative energy sources, and a complete energy review to support a new program scheduled for 1978.

Nuclear policy made strange political bedfellows. The Conservative Party, which had 14 per cent of votes in the last Parliament, fully supported the Social Democratic nuclear policy, and the Liberal Party, with 10 per cent of the seats, was also essentially on the government's side. Fälldin says that, if the Conservative Party were to join in a coalition government, it would have to be on Center Party terms, and that means supporting the anti-nuclear line. This would be very hard for the Conservatives, who get major support from business and industry. Curious though it may seem to outsiders, a survey taken last spring by the Swedish business magazine *Veckans Affärer* showed that businessmen have far more confidence in the Social Democrats—who are Socialists—than in Thorbjörn Fälldin, a dedicated non-Socialist and free enterpriser. For Swedes this comes as no surprise: over the years the Social Democrats have enacted laws that create perhaps the world's best climate for corporate investments and capital growth. The annual *Business Week* survey of international corporate performance, published July 26, disclosed that last year Swedish companies were the most profitable of any outside the United States, with an average return on book value of 19.3 per cent, or just about double the international average.

The Social Democrats took every opportunity to point out the risks embodied in the Center Party's nuclear line. For example, Svante Lundkvist, Agriculture Minister (and head of environmental affairs) said, "The Social Democrats and trade unions pledge to conserve energy as much as possible—but we refuse to accept unemployment. Energy is vital to insuring full employment. And using more oil and coal is a greater threat to mankind than nuclear power."

Fälldin says employment would not suffer if the nuclear program were dropped; workers could be transferred to energy conservation projects. Here he notes that about one-half of all energy consumed in Sweden is used to heat homes and buildings. If a massive program were instituted to make heating and insulation more efficient, one-fourth of the total energy could be saved, and that, he says, "is more than the thirteen nuclear stations would provide." Opponents point out that Fälldin is mixing different energy forms: most space heating is by oil-fired boilers; nuclear plants produce electricity, 50 per cent of which is used by industry.

Although thirteen nuclear reactors—to be located at four stations—are relatively few, at least by American standards, Sweden does have the largest nuclear program per capita of any nation. And with only five stations operating, the nuclear share of electrical production, 20 per cent, is one of the world's highest. In 1975, Sweden —with a population of only 8 million—had the world's sixth highest nuclear production, its 12 million-megawatt-hour gross output from this source being exceeded only by that of the United States, Great Britain, West Germany, France, Japan and Canada. In the first six months of this year, Swedish nuclear power output was greater than that of Canada, almost equal to that of France, and just below that of West Germany.

Sweden has almost no fossil fuel resources—only some tiny oil deposits found recently on the Baltic island of Gotland and some small coal fields in south Sweden. The vast hydro resources in the far north, which contributed much to Sweden's industrial expansion in this century, are almost fully exploited. Sweden's energy vulnerability and its reliance on outside sources came home with a shock during the oil crisis. Neighboring Norway does, of course, have vast oil deposits in the North Sea, but moves toward joint Swedish-Norwegian projects to tap these finds have gone slowly. The first joint projects will probably be in petrochemical and refining ventures.

Sweden's energy vulnerability and the nation's desire to maintain self-sufficiency led to Sweden's great interest in nuclear energy immediately after World War II. In the initial years of research and development, Sweden chose to follow the "heavy water line." Heavy water reactors use natural uranium as fuel, and this does not require enrichment, which today is provided only by the superpowers. Sweden has some of the world's largest known deposits of uranium, and this, used in heavy water reactors, could make the nation self-sufficient. During World War II, Sweden extracted oil from the same uranium shale deposits, but this was halted in the early 1960s, as being both uneconomical and environmentally damaging.

Uranium mining and milling has proceeded on a small, experimental scale at Ranstad in south-central Sweden for about ten years. The state-owned mining company, LKAB, proposed a large expansion last year, but there was strong opposition from the three municipalities in which the mine is located, and LKAB suspended its plan. Expansion of the Ranstad uranium mine and mill is today a major local issue in the three municipalities. (In Sweden municipalities have partisan elections and can veto projects on environmental grounds.) The government recently proposed uranium mining at a find in the far north of Sweden, where there is a need to create jobs and where the Social Democrats have had a strong majority.

Sweden's first nuclear reactor—except for several small research units—went into operation in 1963 in an underground station in the Stockholm suburb of Farsta. A

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pressurized heavy water unit, known as the Agesta station, it was built to heat this apartment house suburb of 25,000 population and also to provide a small amount of electricity to the city power system. The station operated for ten winters, the only one in the world located so close to a large population center and also the only one used for district heating. However, it was never economical, and one reason for its finally being moth-balled was the growing demand for highly trained operating personnel, who could better be used at larger, more efficient, stations. Only one major technical problem developed during its last years: water began to seep into the rock cavern wall and there was some danger that the steel wall lining would rust.

A major environmental advantage of nuclear power over oil that the Social Democrats stressed during the recent campaign is evident at Farsta. Heat for the suburb is now provided by a conventional large oil plant, and housewives sometimes notice soot. A bigger problem is sulfur dioxide: despite a program to allow only low-sulfur oil to be burned in Sweden, the nation's forests and lakes suffer from sulfur drifting in from Great Britain and the continent.

Sweden's second nuclear station, Marviken, was not at all successful. A heavy water plant originally designed to produce 140 Mw, it included some advanced designs for superheating. It was completed in 1969, but never put into operation. Licensing authorities insisted on extensive rebuilding to meet safety standards. By that time, the utilities had become disenchanted with heavy water. Light water technology had made major commercial breakthroughs and it was seen as more economical, efficient and reliable. Instead of investing more money in Marviken, the government decided to convert the conventional equipment into an oil-fired system, and use the reactor for research projects. The major study program, which has been underway there for a number of years and with international support—including the United States—involves full-scale destructive testing of the nuclear containment system. These are the only such tests ever run anywhere.

In Sweden, the State Power Board supplies about 45 per cent of the country's electricity, the rest being provided by municipal or private companies. Like all public utilities operated by the Swedish state, the Power Board operates on a commercial basis, and does in fact make a healthy profit, although its rates are among the world's lowest. (The Swedish Post Office and the Telecommunications Authority also operate profitably. Indeed, the Telecommunications Authority—which boasts the world's lowest phone rates—is the only one in the world that is self-financing, and need not borrow for capital investments.)

Thus, the political argument for heavy water was overcome by practical economics. ASEA, the heavy electrical equipment company which built the Agesta and Marviken reactors, was able to modernize its technology to provide more up-to-date systems. In the mid-1960s, because of heavy financial needs for nuclear investments, the state joined ASEA to form a jointly owned nuclear firm, ASEA-ATOM.

ASEA-ATOM received a series of orders for light water reactors in the late 1960s and 1970s, and today has four in operation. (The fifth reactor operating here was supplied by America's Westinghouse, which is also building two more.) ASEA-ATOM is the only company that can offer a boiling light water reactor independent of American designs or licenses, but that has not helped it to win contracts abroad. Despite years of effort, the company's only export contracts are for two units being built in Finland. In the early 1960s, ASEA almost sold a heavy water reactor to India; it lost out to Canada—which was, perhaps, just as well for the Social Democrats, considering the uses to which India has put its nuclear technology.

The Social Democrats pushed the argument that, without electrical energy in large quantities, Sweden's big electrical-consuming basic industries—steel, pulp, paper, mining, metal—cannot expand. And as Labor Minister Ingemund Bengtsson said, "Today, it's no luxury for a family to have a freezer and other household appliances —especially when both parents are working."

Not that freezers or appliances are the height of luxury in this country. Some years back, Sweden climbed to the top in the conventional "living standard" statistics. It has reached a stage now where the Energy Savings Committee, set up by the government after the oil crisis, is expected to recommend sharp restriction on electrical heating of unoccupied country cottages. About one of every four Swedish families has a country home, and the number is growing fast. Most of them are electrically heated, and owners keep the heat on even when they are not in use. The energy committee estimates that, at the present rate of construction, by 1985 half the output of a large nuclear station would be required just to heat country cottages.

Opponents of nuclear energy advance arguments similar to those heard in the United States. One well-known U.S. critic, Arthur Tamplin, has taken up part-time residence in Sweden to assist the major environmental group, known as The Environment Center. Led by biologist Björn Gillberg, the center a few months ago arranged the world's first international meeting of anti-nuclear groups. The aim was to organize some kind of regular international information exchange system. Assisting the Swedish environmentalists and the Center Party in its anti-nuclear activities is Prof. Hannes Alfvén, a Swedish nuclear physicist and Nobel Prize winner.

The recent California referendum on nuclear energy was covered extensively here by the press. And now that the Social Democrats have at last been beaten, the environmentalists in many countries may interpret the election as a rejection of nuclear power by the Swedish people. To a degree it was, but it should not be forgotten that nuclear energy was one of several major issues in dispute. Another was "socialization"—a strange matter to be debated in a country that has had a Socialist government for forty-four years! However, a trade union proposal that received much attention from the three non-Socialist opposition parties and on which they wanted the government to take a clear stand would establish special workers' funds, to be created from a percentage of company profits, and then invested in the stock of

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corporations—in short, a form of worker ownership. The opposition parties said this would be a major move toward "socialization." They also complained of Social Democratic recommendations that the pharmaceutical and school-book publishing industries be nationalized.

The Social Democrats have always followed a pragmatic line on nationalization. Some 95 per cent of industry is in private hands, and the state usually steps in to take over private companies (as it did last year in the case of a large shipyard) only when the private owners are heading for bankruptcy, with the imminent risk of unemployment. When the Center Party has formed and begun to lead a coalition government, it will have a chance to discover whether the Swedes voted for less nuclear power or less socialization—perhaps less of both. In any case, Sweden has put the rest of the industrial West on notice that the "peaceful atom" is a social issue that can topple the most secure of governments. □

LAW OF THE SEA

HAS IT MISSED THE BOAT?

VED P. NANDA

When the U.N. Law of the Sea Conference adjourned in New York on September 17 (it was the fifth such session since the conference was convened in the summer of 1974) without concluding a comprehensive treaty on ocean use and resources development, a close observer remarked: "We may already have missed the boat; I feel that by the time the conference convenes next May it may be too late." He was expressing a concern, felt by many others, that unless there are major changes of positions, the participating countries have little hope of reaching accord on the highly sensitive issues that remain. Secretary of State Kissinger's warning to the conference was equally ominous: "There are limits beyond which the United States will not go, and we are close to such limits now."

The major unresolved issues include: (*1*) The nature, functions and powers of the new international machinery to be established for the exploitation of resources lying within the "common heritage of mankind"—that is, lying on and under the deep seabeds beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. (*2*) The demands by "geographically disadvantaged" nations (those that are landlocked or have limited or inadequate coasts) that they be guaranteed access to the sea and a share in the exploitation of offshore resources and fisheries. (*3*) The legal status of marine scientific research in coastal areas—on the continental shelf and in the exclusive offshore 200-mile economic zone. (*4*) Terms and machinery for settling disputes arising from differences of interpretation and incompatible national practices. In addition, there is some concern that issues related to freedom of navigation within the economic zone as well as in straits and archipelagoes have not been resolved to the satisfaction of nations most interested in the outcome.

On the first issue, the nature of the international machinery for regulating the mining of the deep seabeds, the major questions are: How powerful will the machinery be? Who will control its decision making? What rights will it have to decide who exploits what part of the ocean, for what resources, and on what terms and conditions? How will benefits be allocated? On all these questions, there is a deep rift between the industrially advanced countries and the developing nations, primarily on economic grounds.

The countries that now have or are likely to gain in the near future the technological ability to exploit the deep seabeds are led by the United States and include its European allies, Japan and the Soviet Union. These nations concede the need to establish an International Seabed Authority, but seek to limit its powers and to make it operate so as to insure protection of the interests of their companies which possess the necessary technology to exploit these resources.

In short, the developed nations are unwilling to hand over to democratic control what they consider to be the prerequisites for large-scale activity in the area—the right of access and security of tenure. They find the principle of "one nation, one vote" unacceptable in administering the Authority. Instead, they favor special-interest voting procedures and oppose discretionary control by the proposed Authority over access to seabed resources, or over terms and conditions of mining contracts, limits of production, marketing procedures and prices.

The developing countries, the so-called Group of 77 (their number has now grown well beyond 100), have neither technological nor financial ability to undertake the seabed mining operations. What they have, instead, is a large bloc of votes and a desire to share in the hidden treasures of the sea. They demand the establishment of a strong Authority to implement the "common heritage" concept.

The developing countries call for an Authority having sufficient powers to regulate and control exploration and exploitation, limit production and set prices to insure that the economic interests of the present producers of land-based minerals among the Group of 77 are adequately protected. They prefer the application of the General Assembly concept of "one nation, one vote" to the decisions made by the Authority. These demands are in line with the recent claims of the developing countries for the creation of a new international economic order.

The Revised Single Negotiating Text, which served as

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the basis for the recent negotiations and was prepared by the chairman of the committee responsible for discussing issues of the deep seabed authority, is heavily biased in favor of developing countries. However, a realistic appraisal would compel developing nations to reassess their position and to seek compromises; otherwise they might face a *fait accompli* if the United States and its European allies were to allow requests of existing corporations to begin exploration and exploitation of the deep seabed. Some powerful interests in the United States prefer that avenue.

Major considerations which thus far have prevented a negotiated settlement of these disputed issues include conflicting national and regional interests, and competing interests between industrially advanced and developing nations, as well as between coalitions cutting across geographical and ideological boundaries. The critical question becomes: Is there to be any multilateral convention or treaty, or will each nation decide the issues for itself, with repeated national practices leading to the formation of a new international law of the sea based on customary practice? For if no agreement seems to be forthcoming by the end of the year, unilateral national actions will place formidable hurdles in the way of multilateral accords. To illustrate:

¶ Mexico, Canada and the United States have recently announced the extension of their fisheries jurisdiction to 200 miles from their respective coasts. (This is, in any event, in accord with the economic zone concept of the proposed law of the sea convention.)

¶ U.S. companies interested in deep-sea mining have become increasingly impatient. Deep Sea Ventures has been seeking "permission" from the Department of State to begin immediate exploratory operations. U.S. legislation now pending, the Deep Seabed Hard Minerals Act (S. 713, H.R. 1270), would guarantee the investment of such companies against retaliatory action or treaty violations, if and when a law of the sea convention comes into force. It would also obligate the government to compensate the companies if their mining operations became uneconomical because of any condition accepted by the United States in an international treaty. For the last four years, the Congress has considered legislation asserting the right of the government to license U.S. corporations to mine the deep seabeds until an international agreement is reached.

¶ In a widely publicized statement, Secretary Kissinger has warned: "If the deep seabeds are not subject to international agreements the United States can and will proceed to explore and mine on its own. . . . If agreement is not reached this year, it will be increasingly difficult to resist pressure to proceed unilaterally."

If one asks, is a compromise still possible?, the answer is yes, because the ever increasing awareness on both sides that a stand-off between the two sides, one wielding economic power and the other sheer numbers, is in the interest of neither. All nations will be losers if, in the absence of a treaty, anarchy results. And conflicting claims on the seabed resources are likely to trigger potential armed conflicts.

It would appear, basing one's hunch upon the conference deliberations and upon several informal discussions among delegates from both developed and developing countries, that the possible compromise is likely to center on proposals such as: Access to the deep seabeds for the development of resources will be shared by the Authority on the one hand and nation-states, state enterprises and private enterprises on the other. Arrangements could be devised to allow a parallel system of exploitation whereby resource development was undertaken both by the Authority and by joint ventures, or contractual arrangements could be made between the Authority and nation-states, state enterprises and private companies. Secretary Kissinger has recently reiterated the U.S. proposal under which each mining applicant would propose two sites for exploitation. The Authority would then award the applicant one site, and would either mine the other site directly or make it available to developing countries under its direction. The developed countries, led by the United States, have promised the Authority the necessary financing, equipment and know-how to set up its own seabed mining operations. Thus the Authority would be much more powerful than the mere licensing body as originally urged by the United States.

The decision-making machinery in the Authority would be shared between an Assembly where each nation had one vote and which prescribed general policies, and the executive body—the Council—which would supervise the day-to-day operations, including the exploitation. Twenty-four members of the proposed thirty-six-member council would be elected on the principle of equitable geographical representation, and twelve members would represent special interests. The composition of the council may pose difficult problems; the industrialized countries will insist on a formula that insures them an effective majority in the council.

The Authority would be empowered to enter into international commodity agreements for various seabed-produced resources. A temporary limitation on production seems necessary to protect land-based producers. The United States has proposed such a limitation "on production of the seabed minerals tied to the projected growth in the world nickel market, currently estimated to be about 6 per cent a year. This would in effect limit production of other minerals contained in deep seabed nodules, including copper." Other possibilities include choosing a base year and limiting contracts to those expected to produce seabed minerals equal to a stated percentage of the increased demand for nickel and copper, and measured by a five-year moving average of expected industrial growth.

Similarly, accords can be reached on each of the four other issues mentioned earlier. Although divergent views on terms and conditions for conducting scientific research in 200-mile coastal zones seem to be impeding much-needed marine research, a balance can be struck between the perceived needs of coastal states for economic security and the common interest of the world community in furthering marine scientific research. Thus far, the conference has reached basic agreement on a 12-mile limit of territorial waters, with another 188 miles comprising

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an economic zone in which the coastal state has special rights to both living and nonliving resources, while the rights of the international community in navigation seem to be insured. As to other interests, such as scientific research and environmental regulation, a balance can be struck between coastal nations' special interests and the common interests of the world community.

It is imperative that full agreement on unresolved issues be reached, or at least that a provisional structure be agreed to, with the understanding that it would eventually lead to comprehensive accords. Perhaps there is some validity to the contention that not enough is known about deep seabed mining conditions to draw up a comprehensive treaty at this time. But, on balance, a comprehensive and widely accepted treaty would insure orderly and peaceful development of these resources, and set a precedent for later cooperative efforts in other fields, thereby making significant contribution toward the establishment of a world order based on justice.

If the attempts to reach such an agreement fail, several alternatives to a comprehensive treaty are possible, such as agreement on a declaration of broad principles to be subsequently codified in precise terms; vague, inadequate agreement or an agreement not widely acceptable; partial agreement on some issues; and total lack of agreement, allowing the conference to become a forum for ongoing discussion and negotiation somewhat on the model of the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which allows the law to be formulated by unilateral and bilateral state practices.

A race to grab and hold lands under the high seas, and consequently a potential source of serious conflict, will be hard to avoid under any of these alternatives. As Lyndon Johnson said more than a decade ago: "We must insure that the deep seas and the ocean bottoms are, and remain, the legacy of all human beings." It is imperative that this principle guide national policies until a comprehensive treaty becomes a reality. □

BANKS AS ROBBERS

HOW THEY STOLE MY TIME

WILLIAM SAROYAN

Last April, the day after I returned to my house in Paris after a long absence, I decided to open a bank account with the two checks in my possession from Florida State University at Tallahassee—one for $1,000, the other for $500. No use not being businesslike.

Consequently, I looked in the phone book, having in mind setting up an appointment, in order to save time. Bankers were among the first people to pass along the word that time is money. I have never quite found it so, but money is their business and time is mine.

At any rate, they've got the money, and I've got the time. And some old shoes I wouldn't throw out for anything in the world. And a postcard for which I paid 1 franc at the Orangerie two or three years ago entitled Nr. 4914 Piet Mondrian (1872-1944) Composition 1921, which I would also not give up for anything in the world, unless a sincere small child wanted it. If you know Piet Mondrian's work, you can guess what the picture side of the card consists of: orange, gray, yellow, blue, black squares separated by thick black lines. Beautiful, if you have a feeling, as I do, for sharp impracticality that appears to be meaningless. Otherwise, why would I throw away a franc when it was well forth 18¢ U.S.? The original of that picture would run you a good bit more than any 18¢ U.S., and indeed possibly, a very good bit more than $18 U.S. or anywhere else, so I long ago gave up any idea of buying an original Mondrian. Only comedians can afford that kind of open-handed support of the art of talented but really laughable graphic weirdos. I've even heard that one of our comedians eight years ago paid $800 spot cash for a Miró which is now worth $900. Although it is a copy, you might very well never suspect that it isn't by Miró himself.

And so I found in the phone book Chase Manhattan Bank, 41 rue Cambon, 073.44.30, which I dialed, having in mind saying to the girl at the bank, "Will you let me speak to the president please, but if he is busy, then the vice president." However, the girl who answered was captured by machinery into a recitation which I listened to three times and part of a fourth time before I gave up, although I was able to piece together that she had once upon a time her very own self spoken in French, and that what she had said was something along the lines of the number you have dialed gets you *me*, with *my* voice, study the book again, and perhaps you will get somebody not captured by time-saving electronics, as I have been, if you want to listen again.

Well, I didn't *want* to, but I did, and yes, that's what it came to, give or take, and she started up a third time saying the number you have dialed, but the rest wasn't really either French or clearly heard, or hearable. It wasn't English, either, and although it here and there *did* sound Armenian, it actually wasn't.

But the open phone book was still before me, so I dialed the next listed number, *même adresse*, that is, 41 rue Cambon, a street I have known since my arrival in Paris with the American Army long ago. My outfit was billeted in the attic of a small (but clean and comfortable) hotel just off Cambon somewhere—and it was at that time that I first saw the fig tree in the courtyard of the Polish church at the corner of St. Honoré and Cambon.

Instead of 073.44.30, I dialed 073.39.49. The phone rang fourteen times and was not answered, not even by a dead voice, so I dialed the next 073 number which was

William Saroyan's latest book is Sons Come and Go, Mothers Hang in Forever, *just published by McGraw-Hill.*

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33.84, with the same result. I went along to 33.70, 33.03, 32.96, 42.07, 43.74, 43.85, 42.32, 09.99, 32.93—all 073 numbers, but there was not one that answered.

Time is money all right. My money. If you don't believe this, look it up in the phone book. Give it a go yourself. Try it. If by some miracle somebody answers, think of something, and say it. Like, "Why do you answer the phone just because it rings? Can't you mind your own business? Why do you insist on obscenity? Shame on you, a banker. I've never asked you for a loan, don't give me any of that banker telephone answering."

Ah the hell with it, I thought, I'll walk down there and take the bull by the horns. What a dream *that* was.

The first uniformed guard asked what I wanted, first in French, then in English.

"I want to open an account," I said.

"Go and sit down over there," he said, "and that girl will help you."

"But there are already eight people waiting. Let me see your vice president, please."

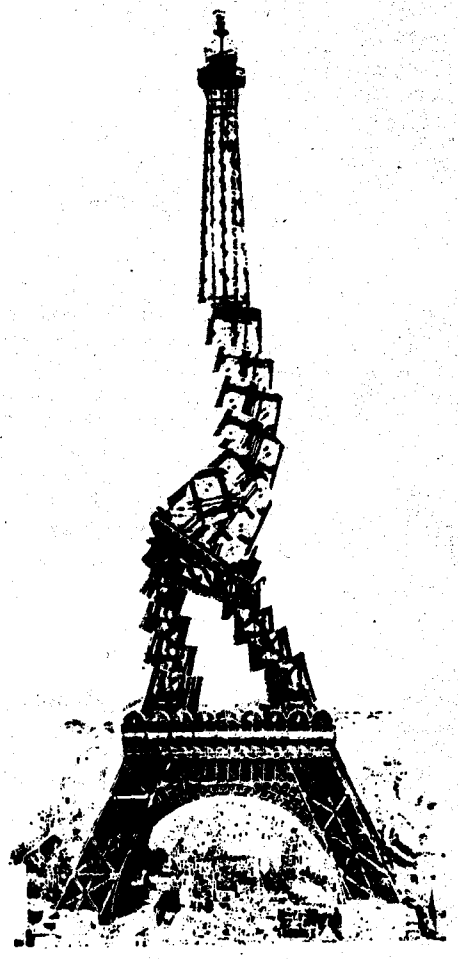
He waved to another guard in uniform, longer in the service, I suppose, and possibly American-born, or the issue of an American father and a girl of Cambon Street.

"Yes, sir," he said in English, "what is it?"

I told him what it was. He told me to go sit down with the eight other waiting people and start waiting.

I said, "No, sir, I'll go look for a vice president."

I went and he followed. Directly across the way were eight tellers, all idle. "Which way to the vice president?" I said to the first one I came to.



"What do you say?" he replied in French.

"No, no," the second guard said, "not over there, you must go over *there* and wait."

"You've learned to say that," I said. "Listen to this, please. You might want to add it to your repertory. That girl over there in the red dress is going to have a nervous breakdown in the next hour. I am not going to go over and sit like the rest of those good Americanos, I want to deposit $1,500 in this bank, and I want a vice president to manage this small piece of business for me."

The guard went off to chat with the first guard, and I asked a girl at a typewriter if she would be good enough to direct me to a vice president.

The office manager came up and said, "Yes, sir, what is it, please?" I told him.

"Ah, yes," he said. "Come with me."

At last, I thought. He and I chatted as we left the office, saying such things as, "You became a banker after much careful thought, I suppose," and he replied, "Toulouse, yes, sir, I was born in Toulouse."

And suddenly we were at the railing beyond which the girl in the red dress was going mad working out the problem of only one troubled man, while eight others sat fidgeting, waiting their turns, and the office manager said, "You must—"

"No, sir," I said. "No, sir, I must *not* go sit down. I must leave this bank, and I mean forever. Eighteen tellers standing around dreaming about night life, but nobody to help that poor girl. Good-by, sir. Good-by to you, too, Monsieur le Garde, if that's the way you want it put, *guardez bien le dernier sou pour moi.*"

And of course by now the bank had robbed me of well over an hour of prime bank time, which at *any* rate of exchange is worth at least a dime, and a dime here and a dime there mounts up, as Edison himself said, paraphrasing Franklin, another visitor to Paris.

Well, as long as I was near the Place Vendôme, the place of class, of the Ritz, why, I would walk right into a bank and transact my business, and then go whistling into Brentano's, for a look at the new books. I walked into Morgan Guaranty Trust and very cheerfully addressed the girl in the open cage marked information. "I want to deposit $1,500, please."

"Of course," she said. "Will you sit down at the writing table?"

I thought, now we're in business, so let me use some of this letter paper for a few notes about how I spent my first day back in Paris. I was scribbling quickly when out of a glass cubbyhole came a businessman in a businessman's suit and said, "Yes, please come to my office." I didn't say, "You call *this* an office? I've seen bootblacks in Fresno with bigger offices."

The man looked not especially unlike the President: of the *whole* United States, I mean, not of the bank: but entirely without any of our man's panache.

"You have been recommended to the bank?" he said. "No," I said. "I recommended myself. As I was passing by, I noticed your sign, and I said to myself, Go on in there and deposit $1,500; it's a bank."

Still without anything like panache, the banker said, "You do not have an account with the bank?"

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"No sir," I said, "I don't, but at your branch at 5th Avenue and 44th Street in New York I used to have an account, but I closed it. I moved. They *mailed* the money to me."

The man said, "You must have an account in the bank." I said, "I'm here to *open* an account."

"Ah, but that is not the same thing," he said. "We must abide by the bank's rules and regulations."

I said, "Well, sir, I'll tell you. I don't doubt that the bank does indeed have its rules and regulations, it certainly has this *place*, and it has *you*, but you see I have my rules and regulations, too, and one of them is not to prolong a useless discussion. No bank can do me a favor. No bank ever has. Fifty years ago when the banks failed in California, every member of my family lost years of savings, which to this day the banks have not made good. That of course was also in accordance with bank rules and regulations, was it not?"

And so I left that bank and that banker, too.

At the Bank of America only a few doors away the banker was from Scotland, married to a French girl, with a good assortment of boys and girls, a nice guy entirely, but he said that in order to *open* an account, I would have to go to the branch at number 44 Avenue de la Grande Armée, and ask for Mr. Zlofel. "Zlofel?" I said. "Is Mr. Zlofel Assyrian?" "No," the man from near Glasgow said. "I believe he's Lithuanian."

"Ah, well, then, you see, there we are," I said.

"Where are we?" the banker said.

"I never go from Place Vendôme to 44 Avenue de la Grande Armée to open an account unless it's with an Assyrian," I said. "That's been a long-standing policy, but I will tell you *this*. It *has* been pleasant not to do business with you—because I've always been fond of the poems of Robert Burns, and my first play is called *My Heart's in the Highlands*. Would that all the rest of me were in the Highlands, too, right now."

I walked back to my home, and remembered Roy Gardner robbing banks all over the great Southwest during 1919 and 1920, before they finally caught up with him.

He robbed the banks of a few dollars and he never hurt any banker. Real bank robbery is never done by such simple souls as Roy Gardner and Willie Sutton; it is done by the banks themselves.

They rob the people who look at the stuffed shirts in monkey cages, and believe their silly turns of language. Never mind the money my family lost in Fresno when the banks *failed*, as they put it. What about the *hours of time* robbed from me?

That's the only bank robbery to beware of, and it goes on all the time. □

BOOKS & THE ARTS

Count Your Dead: They Are Alive

NEW POEMS. *By Eugenio Montale. Translated by G. Singh. New Directions. 124 pp. $7.95. Paper $2.95.*

JOSEPH CARY

At the close of its profile of Montale (white-haired . . . writer of elegies for his dead wife . . . childless . . . virtual recluse) on the occasion of his winning the Nobel Prize for Literature last year, *The New York Times* quoted him on the topic of reading his critics, an unpleasant experience he likened to lying on an operating table. "You must be dead before you can be judged," he is said to have said. "The author must be dead. The reader must be dead. Everyone must be dead. Time has become so fast." The disillusioned, even peevish, note is there in (translated) black and white: a lunar landscape swims to view, some definitively "post-modern" and posthumous world wherein poetry, poets, common readers and critics alike have turned to stone, poised and objective.

One has to be wary of taking even a Nobel poet *au pied de la lettre*, and the *Times*' portrait of the artist as melancholy Jaques or Eeyore—cued no doubt by the Swedish Academy's reference to his "deep pessimism if not negativism" and an ancient and misleading custom in the English-speaking world of linking his work to Eliot's—seems to me to miss the vein of ironic humor, often self-directed, and satirical fantastication evident in his most recent poetry (e.g., 1961-72: *New Poems* represents about half of it) and surely present in the quotation above. Yes, ideally all the evidence should be in before a final judgment is rendered: ideally the author ought to be dead. But how discriminate between the judgment and the judge whose weighed response is part and parcel of the evidence? Ideally he should be dead as well. But who should be exempted? We all of us have our opinions, partialities, our daily more or less provisional judgings; hence "everyone must be dead" and with this magnificent quietus we are made ideal, completed and really responsible. *And* (this is the trouble with ideal solutions) inoperative, indifferent. Sadder and not much wiser we return with Signor Montale to this living, conditional, improvised, unjust world of ours where the tempo is hot and the dead seem stable by comparison. We have been on one of his little flights of sardonic fancy, this one prompted by his recent international-celebrity status.

The materials for Montalean humor are, I think, much the same as the materials of his central myth expressed thirty years ago in the following manner:

> It seemed to me I lived under a glass bell, and yet I felt myself close to something essential. A subtle veil, a thread just kept me from the ultimate

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quid. Absolute expression would have meant the breaking of that bell, that thread, the end of the illusion of the world as representation. But this was an unreachable limit.

If this recalls the solipsistic nightmare of Eliot's wasteland prisoners—

We think of the key, each in his prison
Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison

and the accompanying gloss from F.H. Bradley to the effect that "my experience falls within my own circle, a circle closed on the outside," there is nevertheless a vital distinction to be made: in Montale's world the circle is not entirely vicious, the blockade can be run, the limit may be not only reached but surpassed. In the earlier poems this rule-proving exception, this passage permitted from contingency to "something essential," this "liberty, miracle, fact that was not necessary" (as he put it in the great "Chrysalis" of 1924), is for certain others only; the poet sees himself as witness, transfixed and prevented from participation in the miracle his poetry serves. In later poems however the *direction* of passage is discovered to be more benevolent: centripetal that is—if we take the self as center—as well as centrifugal. Which is to say that a chosen few from Montale's life-experience—those evoked by his famous *tu* for instance, or the stormy angel Clizia, or more recently his companion-wife La Mosca whom the doctors pronounced deceased in 1963—may return from beyond the barrier bringing those who must, like the poet, remain behind care and renewed courage to endure with decency. For Montale, who only half-mockingly styles himself a Nestorian (Nestorius was a fifth-century "heretic" who taught the fundamental humanity of Christ), believes that the other order—the one we call divine—must submit to incarnation, to metamorphosis into flesh and blood, in order to fulfill itself. He has written how "that order in which we sluggish ones move, insane as it is, seems to be the only one in which divinity can unfold its proper attributes, to be recognized and tasted within the limits of a proposition whose significance we do not know." Like Hölderlin he feels that the possibility of such a recognition is the privilege of poets. And hence in *New Poems* he can write of "divinity incognito" (Professor Singh's translation of this passage is ungrammatical and I have retouched it somewhat):

I say
that immortals invisible
to others and perhaps unaware
of their privilege,
deities in corduroy with rucksacks,
priestesses in gabardine and sandals,
Pythias wrapped in the smoke
of a huge bonfire of pinecones,
numinous phantoms not unreal, tangible
though never touched,
I have seen them more than once
but I was too slow when I tried
to unmask them.

A "new poem" on an old theme: the reader even slightly familiar with Montale can easily spot its connections with, say, the "motets" of the 1930s or the extraordinary *canzoni* ("New Stanzas," "News from Amiata," *Silvae*, etc.) of the war and immediate postwar period. But the pre-1960 Montale is above all a dramatic poet, the poet of (the italics are his own) "*this* individual, in *this* place, in *this* situation," and the product is matchless: a powerful and impassioned vocal music moving through its various specific occasions of ecstasy and anguish, metrically intricate, *ore rotundo*. The new manner is very different.

It lies in what I shall call a distancing or de-dramatizing of the subject (as with a telescope reversed) by various stylistic means. In the sample above one may note the discursive tendency of the free verse cadences themselves, the focus upon a general phenomenon (deities, priestesses glimpsed more than once) rather than a unique situation, the amusing touches of modish *vie de bohème* in the broad details of disguise, the wry-rueful note in the final clause—all of which contribute to the vein of humor lightening the latest work. Something of this more casual, free-floating, "prosaic" and *désengagé* mood may be caught in the Italian titles for the poems of this phase: *Satura* (miscellany, mixed-bag-including satire, gallimaufry) and, of course, *Diario*. I do not mean that earlier Montale lacked humor, far from it, but the vein is much more in evidence here. Perhaps it is the appropriate voice for a certain sort of old age and retirement: the poet was 72 when he wrote "Divinità in Incognito." But the ghosts of Yeats and Ungaretti are there to give me the lie.

In his generally informative introduction Professor Singh adduces the example of Thomas Hardy as a parallel to the Montale of *New Poems*: the point of the comparison lies in the fact that both poets composed sequences arising from the death of their wives, Hardy in the *Veteris vestigia flammae* (vestiges of the ancient flame) of 1912-13, Montale in the *Xenia* (guest-offerings) of 1964-67. But if the occasions are similar the differences in situation and response and therefore tonality are far more striking:

Can it be you that I hear? Let me view you, then,
Standing as when I drew near to the town
Where you would wait for me: yes, as I knew you then,
Even to the original air-blue gown!
(Hardy)

Your speech so halting and unguarded
is the only thing left
with which to content myself.
But the accent is changed, the colour is different.
I'm getting used to listening to you
in the tick-tack of the teletype,
or in the voluble smoke rings of
my cigars from Brissago.
(Montale)

Hardy's vestiges haunt and taunt him—the original air-blue gown is gone for ever or survives in mocking memory only. Whereas Montale, technically bereft and bemused, most unelegiacally hosts a persisting if elusive presence flickeringly *there* in the charmed clutter of what he calls La Mosca's relics ("calendars, jewel cases, medicine bottles and creams") which manage to encapsulate and maintain her essential being. "Count your dead: they are alive," as Wyndham Lewis once wrote. A Hardy more truly related to the spirit of *New Poems* is, I think, the author of *Human Shows, Far Phantasies, Songs, and Trifles* (e.g., a "satura"), or of the lovely lyric entitled "The Garden Seat" which Montale translated, complete unto rhyme and rhythm, in the 1940s:

Its former green is blue and thin,
And its once firm legs sink in and in;
Soon it will break down unaware,
Soon it will break down unaware.

At night when reddest flowers are black
Those who once sat thereon come back;
Quite a row of them sitting there,
Quite a row of them sitting there.

With them the seat does not break down,
Nor winter freeze them, nor foods drown,
For they are as light as upper air,
They are as light as upper air!

One aspect of the comic touch in late Montale is precisely this sense of the insubstantiality in the world of the so-called living, our ongoing "human show" landing its capsules on the moon, consoling itself with Teilhard de Chardin, packing a murderous Olympics. As he notes to his guest, La Mosca,

We had studied for the hereafter
a token of recognition, a whistle;
I'm now trying to modulate it in the hope
that we're all already dead without knowing it.

In his introduction to *Imitations*

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Poems by W.S. Merwin

TALK OF FORTUNE

I meet her on the street
she says she is away a lot but it was
actually when she was living here
she came home to the apartment house
which I have just left
and inside by the mail boxes
she found a small old
woman who seemed to be trying
to open the inside door
and looked as though she had been
crying or it could have been laughing
and they tried to talk but
the old woman could not
speak more than a few words
and yet she was well dressed
even old velvet
and when the door was opened for her
she would not go in
for anything
but kept smiling and asking for
something or somebody in
another language
and when she could not make herself
understood she gave
my friend a leaf and went
away and the next day
my friend found a lot of money

GRASS BEGINNING JULY

A pause at the top of a leap
a pause in the sun
itself as we say
east wind drifts up the steep hillside
on the mountain the heat of noon
has dried the full-grown
manes of the grass
the late running herds
they run among the yucca
the deer-browsed yucca
yellow daisies cactus flowers
they run past rocks waiting on the slope
and prayer flag clothes drying
on the way to the trees
all of us moving together

ROAD

In early snow
going to see a friend
I pass thousands of miles of fences

JUNCTION

Far north a crossroad in mud
new cement curbs a few yards each way
rain all day
two men in rubber boots
hurry along under one plastic
carrying loud radio playing music
pass tin shack surrounded by
broken windshields
paintings of north places
only hotel
has no name
no light to its sign
river from bridge long misted mirror
far houses and red boats float
above themselves in gray sky
martins were hunting
in the morning
over log jams by another shore
cold suppertime
thinking of hares in boggy woods
and footprints of clear water

REMEMBERING A BOATMAN

After sundown yellow sky beyond shadow mountains
range upon range in long twilight under few distant clouds
darkening pastures run into the bays
birds are already asleep high on the unlit roan cliffs
straw light still flickers on the water
between two headlands in short summer
at last a long boat rowed by one man standing
appears slowly from behind a headland on the right
and starts across
too far away to hear the sounds of the wood
or see colors
a few times the wake turns up light
then I forget him for years

CROSSING PLACE

I crossed the stream
on the rocks
in the summer
evening
trying not to spill
the pitcher of water
from the falls

SUN

Dark rain at
winter solstice
and in the morning

rosemary under clear sky
bird on south doorstep
poised like a stone

THE FLIGHT

At times in the day
I thought of a fire to watch
not that my hands were cold
but to have that doorway to see through
into the first thing
even our names are made of fire
and we feed on night
walking I thought of a fire
turning around I caught sight of it
in an opening in the wall
in another house and another
before and after
in house after house that were mine to see
the same fire the perpetual bird

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Robert Lowell writes that he "had long been amazed by Montale, but had no idea how he might be worked until I saw that unlike most good poets—Horace and Petrarch are extremes—he was strong in simple prose and could be made still stronger in free verse." I agree with the first point—Montale's muscular, dramatic flair plus his intelligence and sharp wit make his verse, *unlike* Leopardi's or Ungaretti's for example, reasonably available in a "simple prose." On the other hand free verse is surely not a "stronger" medium for any but the latest batch of poems: thus George Kay's prose versions in the *Penguin Book of Italian Verse* strike me as quite as effective as his later verse ones, while Lowell's own Montales seem—how could he avoid it?—irredeemably Lowellesque. In any case Professor Singh has not had to face a difficulty of this order since the originals he has worked on are at least relatively free.

Singh's choice of poems is representative, but I miss the three long "Thrust and Parry" poems that modulate the *Satura* volume. His translations themselves convey the general movement of ideas and images well enough although (I am sure the fault is the publisher's rather than Professor Singh's and has to do with the marketplace) it is a real pity that New Directions did not follow the practice of its earlier Montale selection (Glauce Cambon's edition of *Selected Poems* translated by various hands) in printing the Italian *en face* so that the curious reader might balance the Singh models against their Montalean occasions. No doubt most translation involves a loss of vital energy and this is certainly the case here. We still have need of a *tutto Montale* translated literally with accompanying originals and full notes along the lines of the Angelini version of the *corpus* of a decade ago published in France by Gallimard. □

'To Shake Our Gravity Up': The Poetry of Richard Wilbur

GRACE SCHULMAN

Richard Wilbur's latest book, *The Mind-Reader: New Poems*, his sixth collection since *The Beautiful Changes* (1947), calls attention once again to his way of seeing into the blazing life of commonplace things by presenting them with extraordinary precision of language and in exact detail:

I pause in the stairwell, hearing
From her shut door a commotion of typewriter-keys
Like a chain hauled over a gunwale.
("The Writer")

From the first book to the present one, the poems are remarkable for a wild energy which beats against the set forms he uses. They abound in sudden, propulsive outcries that cut across rhythmic expectations of the blank verse pattern:

Oh, let there be nothing on earth but laundry
("Love Calls Us to the Things of This World")

Or the basic iambic trimeter:

Shatter me, great wind:
I shall possess the field.
("Two Voices in a Meadow")

Often, as in those lines, the passionate rhythm enforces his celebration of ordinary things. "Obscurely yet most surely called to praise," he writes at the outset of "Praise in Summer" (1947), a witty, emphatic invocation to earth's beauty. In Wilbur's poetry, the awareness of physical particularities intimates knowledge of a hidden world of absolute clarity; it recalls Baudelaire's work in its accumulation of facts that betray transcendent reality. And Wilbur's use of received forms serves the intensity of his utterances by providing conventional structures against which that force is perceived.

The Beautiful Changes and Other Poems. Reynal & Hitchcock. 1947.
Ceremony and Other Poems. Harcourt, Brace. 1950.
Things of This World: Poems. Harcourt, Brace. 1956.
Advice to a Prophet and Other Poems. Harcourt, Brace & World. 1961.
The poems above are collected in *The Poems of Richard Wilbur.* Harcourt, Brace & World. 1963. 227 pp. Paper $1.95.
Walking to Sleep: New Poems and Translations. Harcourt, Brace & World. 1969. 78 pp. $4.95.
The Mind-Reader: New Poems. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1976. 67 pp. $6.95.

In his best work that railing power is used to emphasize the baffling contradictions of the world we know:

Watching the blinded waves
Compounding their eclipse, we hear their
Booms, rumors and guttural sucks
Warn of the pitchy whirl
At the mind's end . . .

Those turbulent lines are from "The Beacon (*Things of This World,* 1956), a poem whose central image is a lighthouse that affords an unobscured view of "the deaf unbeatable sea" and illuminates, momentarily, the blackness that confounds our human visions.

Curiously, his poetry has been linked with the word "quietism," a strange word for an even stranger notion that a writer can make a doctrine of tranquillity, especially one with an enormous vocabulary and a fine command of strong verbs. In any case, calmness is not, as it has been thought, an effect of his poetry. To be sure, his elegant, quiet statements are invariably the most urgent, but that method enables him to risk grave utterances without resorting to public rhetoric. With composure he asserts "Let thought be free," and "It is a matter of life and death, my darling." With less composure he writes of the "Booms, rumors and guttural sucks" of the waves, presenting the chaos of impressions through which clarity is perceived.

Although the poet has cherished lucidity from his early work ("There is a poignancy in all things clear" he declares in "Clearness," 1950), he depicts lucid moments in ways that evoke eclipse. So, too, his concern with order evokes savagery, for those opposite impulses are joined in his poetry. Savagery is, for example, fundamental to the nobility of his "John Chrysostom" (1956) who "borrowed of some dumb beast / the wildness to rejoice." The paradox that order can betray wildness—implying also the union of form and freedom—is found in "Ceremony" (1950): When the leaves have learned "to curtsey and quadrille," he writes, "I think there are most tigers in the wood." His poems are charms to preserve order against encroaching blackness: many of them recall certain primitive incantations in their fierce energy and in their phrases similar in meaning and structure.

Wilbur's colloquial force derives from his use of long, flowing sentences enabling the poet to approximate many of the phrases of natural speech. It comes too as a result of his use of falling rhythm and clusters of hovering accents:

Ask us, ask us whether with the world-less rose
Our hearts shall fail us; come de-

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VIKING 1 ON MARS—JULY 20, 1976

1

What throws
this shadow of
the left-handed fencer,
across the bright clubfoot
laid on Mars?

Our faceless, earthly
trespass
done in a plume of exhaust:
engines off
as the first leg
touches down.
No pilot clambers from the tripod;
no Martian runs across the ground.

Sunlight casts
long afternoon shadows
straight as the earth-crow flies.
Makes the same
skeletal selves we know.
The Martian swordsman,
left arm extended,
right akimbo,
is invisible.
Only his dark, grotesque image
reflects on the burglar's footpad.

Without life of its own,
(high-born on the food chain)
Mars radiates
its mythic warrior-spirit.
Full-blown it springs from
blue boulders,
rusty craters
and the light, thin air.
Territoriality
is the spirit's shield.
For a saber,
it accretes
the strength of legends.

Calls on Zeus,
the father,
and on the sun
to twist the earthly spaceship
into cargo-shadows,
menacing as a
consortium of suicides.

2

Shadows shortcut
the Lander's superstructure.
Like black rafts
shooting rapids,
they bounce over
the froth of instruments;
carry truncated angles of
legs and switches,
shock absorbers and gauges,
seismometer and ground scoop;
a lop of the outside, foreign ear.

This flux of shadows
flutters the edges of
struts and nuts and bolts
until the dark lines compose.
Until the imminent adversary forms.
This is the Martian defender,
grounded on the earthly footpad.
his shadow weightless as computer signals.

3

Oblivious of danger,
its orders stored a year ago,
the Lander's camera aims
a nodding mirror.

Across two hundred million miles,
on ninety million screens,
earth people watch
the image of Mars build,
computer-line by line.
The way children wait for the picture
in the jigsaw puzzle,
the dot-drawn coloring book,
the decal transfer.

We shed our thin
slipper of maxims.
Better than stolen fire,
better than Olympian secrets,
we forget the forfeits
for hubris:
the whole soup of early lessons.

We risk our geo-center,
risk a new Original Sin.
We dare to look:
to see the arc of
red dunes, dust and boulders,
the brilliant sky of
another territory;
the ground unroll,
treeless, slow and sure
as a snake,
see it circle
the crewless freighter.

We know the Martian emblem,
already stamped on the Lander.
There will be no confrontation . . .
only the Seconds will fight the duel.

A new Bible begins.

Anne S. Perlman

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manding
Whether there shall be lofty or long standing
When the bronze annals of the oak-tree close.

("Advice to a Prophet")

Those excited rhythms distinguish what I feel is his best book, *Things of This World* (1956), which justly won the Edna St. Vincent Millay Memorial Award, the National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize in the year following its publication. For me, the most powerful poems are "Love Calls Us to the Things of This World," "The Beacon," "For the New Railway Station in Rome," "Speech for the Repeal of the McCarran Act," "John Chrysostom," "Digging for China," "Beasts" and "Statues." Apart from those amazing poems there are smaller ones that reverberate, such as "Apology," a love poem that is his only work in free verse, "Piazza di Spagna, Early Morning," a poem that conveys so well the fugitive moment of beauty, "A Black November Turkey," which ends with the sacrificial but triumphant image of barnyard cocks that "Dawn after mortal dawn, with vulgar joy, / Acclaim the sun."

The striking poems of his earlier books have themes that prefigure the prevalent concerns of the 1956 volume. "The Beautiful Changes," title poem from the 1947 collection, is a meditation on how love heightens the senses and clarifies perceptions, awakening the lover to earth's beauty:

One wading a Fall meadow finds on all sides
The Queen Anne's Lace lying like lilies
On water; it glides
So from the walker, it turns
Dry grass to a lake, as the slightest shade of you
Valleys my mind in fabulous blue Lucernes.

If he praises earth's beauty throughout his work, he celebrates human endeavor as well. "For the New Railway Station in Rome" (1956) is his tribute to things created by men and women:

"What is our praise or pride
But to imagine excellence, and try to make it?
What does it say over the door of Heaven
But homo fecit?"

The poet's dominant concern is the creative process, the fortunate, mysterious force that lives in the mind and in the language, waiting to be released. An early image of art's transforming power is the "Juggler" (1950) who reverses the earth's attraction of objects to himself: "It takes a skyblue juggler with five red balls / To shake our gravity up." In the 1956 volume, "Mind" embodies the poet's belief in the transcendent freedom of human inquiry:

Mind in its purest play is like some bat
That beats about in caverns all alone,
Contriving by a kind of senseless wit
Not to conclude against a wall of stone.

* * * * * *

And has this simile a like perfection?
The mind is like a bat. Precisely. Save
That in the very happiest intellection
A graceful error may correct the cave.

In that wonderful poem, the image of the graceful, imprisoned mind recalls Marianne Moore's figure in "What Are Years" of the one who achieves transcendence through containment, rising upon himself "like the sea in a chasm." In Wilbur's poem, though, it is the radiant performance of wit and style that is his central focus.

Wilbur's most recent books contain two of his longest poems, both in blank verse, both dealing with the creative process. "Walking to Sleep," the title poem of the 1969 collection, is an ironic directive for a journey of the mind. The speaker cautions that the voyage is fraught with "dear acceptances," with traps and horror. "The Mind-Reader," title poem of the 1976 collection, is a dramatic monologue spoken by a charlatan seer at a café in Italy who, though admitting to play-acting the oracle, does indeed know the minds of others.

From his earliest poetry, Richard Wilbur has conveyed with urgency and power the wonder of ordinary things and of the mind that perceives them. He is a poet who treasures words, and he presents precisely detailed, accurate pictures of the beauty he reveals. And in "The Writer" (1976), he offers one of the best metaphors I know for his own poetry and for the creative process. Watching his daughter write a story, the speaker is reminded of a dazed starling unable to fly out of the window of a room it is trapped in. Injured from battering itself against the pane, it finally finds its way and flies to freedom. Then:

It is always a matter, my darling
Of life or death, as I had forgotten. I wish
What I wished you before, but harder.

It is exactly in that graceful, daring way, restrained by form and yet transcending it, risking all, that the poetry of Richard Wilbur is a matter of life or death. □

The Spirit and the City

THE PAST NOW: New Poems. *By Arthur Gregor. Doubleday & Co. 108 pp. $5.95.*

BURIED CITY: Poems. *By Howard Moss. Atheneum Publishers. 56 pp. $6.95.*

JOSEPHINE JACOBSEN

The poetry of Arthur Gregor could scarcely differ more from that of Howard Moss, in temperament, in tone, in the stuff of which it is made. And yet to read their new collections is to realize that a kinship exists between them. Gregor and Moss have in common certain characteristics which help to account for the stature of their poetry. They are two of the best poets we have, in a period in which the writing of poetry has become an epidemic. The qualities they share are a highly disciplined intelligence, the sense that a poem is not a happy—or unhappy—accident, and a concern with those buried human relationships so sparsely evident on the surface upon which we maneuver our lives. In the welter of guess-what-happened-to-me-last-night verse, their poetry speaks only to someone willing to listen. Neither man believes that the writing of poetry demands less technical discipline than the mastery of, say, pitching or figure skating—a point of view abhorrent to the eager practitioners of instant poetry. Their refusal of knee-jerk response has made for poems of durability, which can take a great deal of rough handling and skeptical examination.

As the underlying characteristic of Moss's poetry is analysis, so that of Gregor's is synthesis. "Spiritual" is a word so bedraggled by abuse as to be suspect; but to apply it to Gregor's poetry is to restore its strictest usage.

In *Octavian Shooting Targets*, published more than twenty years ago, history, roots and memory are the book's essence. The tone, since then, has become increasingly clear and rich, but it is still true that no poem is severed from roots which go deep into the hu-

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man past. The consciousness of the European heritage is still strong, but now the sources of heritage are discovered in a wider and deeper field than can be represented by any limited provenance.

Poetry such as this is a threatened species. Reading Gregor, we become conscious of what its even temporary loss would mean. The book's title is accurate. In Gregor's work, the past is never the past; it is alive in every aspect of the poem. The danger for poetry which has a strong spiritual force at its center is that the poems may become remote from the immediate and tangible. Gregor's most impressive accomplishment is his ability to make the spiritual intensely apprehended by the senses.

In this poetry, the inherent image is that of the pilgrim; his memories, the exhilarating or harrowing aspects of his journey, and the constant presence of his expectation—all are packed into the poem's texture.

Symbols of timelessness,
stone trimmings, stone heads and stares,
powerful embodiments, drift there
as in watery surfaces—
lamplights that lead us back
into a past that is.

And again,

Of where he has been, he now steadily
partakes.

Gregor's is such uncautious poetry that the reader, crammed by wary practitioners of "relevance," has a clear sense of the poet's intention of engaging major issues. Where, in one's life, is the godhead? In which moments is one authentically alive, and capable of receiving the extraordinary? Must a vision of peace and concord be abandoned because these things never wholly existed, however briefly? To take on this scale of intention is to work in high altitude without a net.

The book's finest poem, "The Hand upon the Head," deals with the relationship between the god within and the human individual. The god visits, implies splendor, disappears, returns; but exists, always.

He stands ahead of me, not always
facing me
and I must make my way toward him.

I carry out, attempt to carry out,
nothing else.

This encounter does not lead Gregor to ignore the scars inflicted by daily reality. It is the something below these realities which nourishes the poetry.

. . . in the waters' depth

the sheen is undisturbed,
only the surfaces are rough
and foul with glare. . . .

He never minimizes that empty glare.

Thirty years of this and nothing has
changed.
Only the waste is greater, the impa-
tience worse.
The streets had nothing in them then
And have nothing, nothing in them
now.

But the important thing, interesting-

THE GARDEN ROCK

I sing you of Morrisville
(if you can call this cry
a song.) I
(if you call this painful

voice by that great name)
sing you the poverty of my
region and of
the wrong end of Morrisville.

You summer people, I know,
say all its ends are wrong,
but there, right there,
this very end of the wrong end—

a house with windows sagging,
leaning to roadward in defense,
or maybe defiance,
next to the granite ledge,

our cliff of ancient stone
that shoulders our dilapidated
one-lane iron bridge.
Who lives here? I don't know.

But they (Hermes reward them)
made this extraordinary garden,
geraniums,
petunias and nasturtiums

planted in every crevice and all
the footholds of the cliff.
And then
they painted the cliff, yes,

painted the old stone; no design,
just swatches of color, bold
rough splashes
irregularly, garish orange

and livid blue, Is it
fluorescent, do these stones
glow in the dark?
Maybe. I only know

they glow in the day, so
vivid I stopped my car,
whereupon two others
came also inquiring, two

crows in the broken spars
of the white pine tree, cawing
above the house.
Why had those who inhabited

this corner of poverty
painted the stones? Was it
that the flowers
in living bravery nevertheless

made too meager a show
for the ruined cliff? Or did they
think to bring art
to nature, somehow to improve

this corner of ugliness?
I thought, for my part, how
these colors
were beautiful and yet strange

in their beauty, ugly colors,
garish orange, livid blue;
they reminded me
of those Spanish cemeteries
I saw in New Mexico, tin
mirrors and plastic flowers
in the desert. Then
I knew why the stones

had been painted: to make
reparation, such as the poor
might make whose sorrow
had been done here, this

desecration. Is not this
the burden of all poor lands
everywhere,
the basis of poverty?

The poor know this. I guess
the crows know too, because off
they flew,
one by one, cawing, over

the iron bridge, the slashed
ground, the cut-over hills
surrounding Morrisville.
I started my car and drove

out on the iron bridge
which rumbled its sullen
affirmation.
And then I sang and I sing

(if you care to call it song)
the people of Morrisville,
my people, who live
where all the ends are wrong.

Hayden Carruth

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ly, is not horrors or dangers in the streets but an absence, the lack of an essential presence. What they demonstrate is the coin-reverse of the figure which stands ahead and to which the poet must make his way. The figure will not be reached; but its existence, its unpredictable presence, will continue.

In "Deadweight," the book's most somber poem, Gregor repeats,

Something there is which does not pass . . .
Something there is that does not change.

One of the reasons for the book's lack of soft spots is the direct, stripped dignity of its speech—the opposite of that strenuously obscure style of poetry which attempts to distract from its tiny, jaded core. The lines of *The Past Now,* rarely long, flexible as the tones of a human voice, create with the reader a one-to-one encounter. It is poetry for which we should be very grateful indeed.

Howard Moss is pre-eminently—though certainly not exclusively—an urban poet. I know of no other contemporary poet who can so marvelously evoke a city—say, New York, but that is no matter. His relationship with the city is as complex as the city itself. It is a fine blend of distaste, faintly derisive love, and—one needs to say "nostalgia," though conscious of another injured word. The city is fragmented, and one of the prime strengths of Moss's poetry is its sense of fragmentations: of time, of love, of physical surroundings, of social relationships. The shards represent fragments of things which once were whole:

. . . a mail key dropped through a sewer
grating, the address on a packet of matches
you're wild to find but cannot remember.

The tides of relationships turn with the implacable, delicate, undetectable motion of water, leaving behind these physical and emotional *disjecta membra.* He walks the "nothing" streets Gregor has walked.

On a street of epical negation
Clothes that fall apart, food that cannot nourish. . . .

But the same city provokes Moss's almost magical ability to conjure up something quite different:

songs
that streak into the blood are ready, when
you least expect them on the sounding board
and bring back taxi-lights in rain, the ink
of summer, its black lights and golden tans.

Key words in Moss's poetry are "dark" and "light"; above all, he is fascinated by the mystifying and crucial moments in which they meet, the crepuscular encounter. In "Nearing The Lights," for example, a whole series of speculations and relationships branch off from the narrow central shaft, as light penetrates and defines. There is always motion; at his most descriptive, Moss does not write a static poem.

The moon puts down its gangplank on the sea
As if pure light could ever disembark.

Wit, drama, the sharp collision of identities, are perpetually active. *Think of houses, dinners, all mendacious calm. . . .* All his calm is mendacious, a ferment of below-the-surface entanglements. There is in the work such a kinship with Proust that it comes as no surprise to read,

. . . you will always bear
two sacred marks of the interior: memory and art.

For years, Moss has been a brilliant technician. There was a period, in some of his early poetry, when that brilliance of technique seemed not always assimilated by the poem. By the time his *Selected Poems* appeared it was apparent that he had won that battle. There, and notably in *Buried City,* the technique is so fused with the poem's individuality that it cannot be separated, even for admiration. The long final poem which gives the book its name is one of the finest Moss has ever written, and that is saying a great deal.

Incidentally, one line alone would make the book worthwhile. It might be the nation's or the century's epitaph:

Not to be loved is to crave power. □

THEATRE

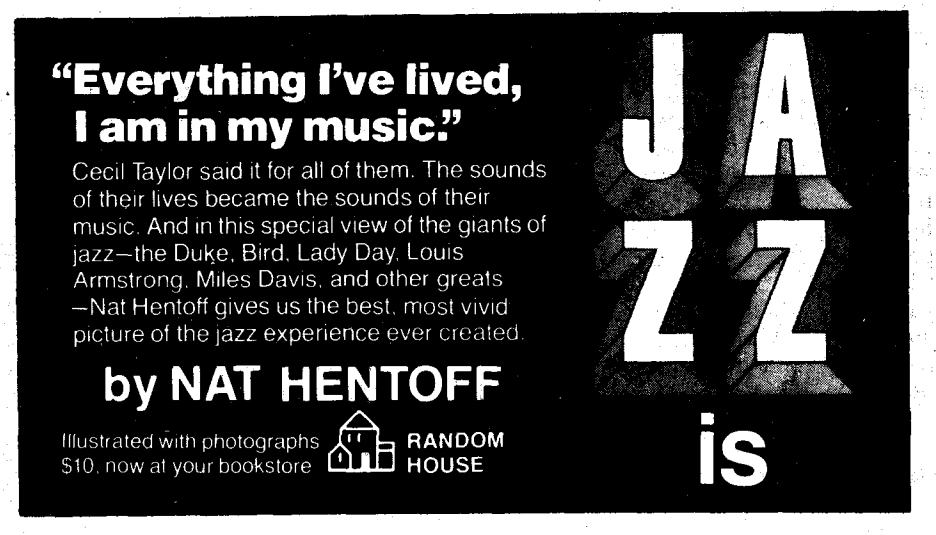
HAROLD CLURMAN

Eugene O'Neill once said that the United States was the greatest failure in history. It had entered the world arena with every possible advantage—a new land, noble ideals, few hierarchical burdens—but it had muffed its opportunity by overlooking the Bible's challenge, "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" In its rush toward material power, America had lost all valid faith. On this premise O'Neill planned a nine-play cycle to be called *A Tale of Possessors, Self-Dispossessed.*

That cycle would undoubtedly have been a tragic work. But imagine if someone today undertook to compose a similar series as farce. Might it not resemble Preston Jones's *A Texas Trilogy* (Broadhurst Theatre)?

Mr. Jones does not seek to prove anything. As for O'Neill's "thesis" he might respond with a four-letter expletive signifying "Perish the thought!" His trilogy is "simply" a depiction of citizens in Bradleyville, a tiny Texas town from 1953 to 1973. It is an unsentimental comedy and much of it is very funny.

Why then did it make me think of O'Neill's projected cycle with the devastating condemnation in its author's mind? Before conjuring up the parallel I had thought of still another American literary mode to which Preston Jones's play might be compared or contrasted. Our 1920s and the immediately preceding years were notable for a spate of novels, stories, poems and plays in an analogous vein: *Winesburg, Ohio, Spoon River Anthology,* novels by Sinclair Lewis and Zona Gale, plays by Paul Green, O'Neill and a host of others.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Their writings gave a disillusioned account of obscure, hitherto neglected communities which exemplified everyday American experience. The picture was often gray and disheartening and where there was humor it tended toward the derisively ghoulish. That body of writing was gladly received by most of us because we had become tired of those "smiling aspects of life" which, according to William Dean Howells, were the most American. In the earlier American theatre there had been more vacant grins and sweet simpering than honest smiles. We were, therefore, elated to acknowledge that, though American, we were people beset by aches and pains common to the rest of humanity.

It has been said that when history repeats itself, it does so as farce. *A Texas Trilogy* is not farce; it is a genre piece in three parts (given separately over three evenings) which, to begin with, has the appearance of minute realism that gradually turns to something close to savagely hilarious grotesquerie. Though I have suggested several comparisons—all of them less absurd than one with Tennessee Williams—it is an *original* work. It fits into no single, obvious category. Jones writes with a keen ear for the speech of a particular locality as if he were only bent on recording it for fun, but we soon realize that *he* is not laughing, but making us laugh, so much so at times that we are hardly aware of what we're laughing at.

We forget that, whether Jones meant it to be so or not, Bradleyville is not just a remote rural town but a microcosm. Something more is being achieved in the trilogy than an inside view of the kind of place we big-city folk know very little about. The play's sights point to domains beyond Texas or the South.

Bradleyville is spiritually void. Most of its vital impulses have dried up or evaporated; their presence for the most part is expressed in spastic jerks. One youth who has come back from the war in Korea does little more than boast of his probably mythical bravery there. He finds nothing in his home town to engage his faculties but membership in a lodge where the chief entertainments are dominoes and boozing. He ends his "career" by cutting his throat. His buddy is a goof who hardly ever spends any time with his wife, except to make her pregnant. He prefers above all to whizz around in his big truck, which is his most intimate companion. Finally, abandoning wife and child, he takes off like a shot.

The wife, Lu Ann, a "beauty technician" whose story is told in Part One of the triptych, is the most positive person in the play. But there is little to fill her life apart from her by-God pesky daughter, her devotion to her alcoholic brother and paralyzed mother and the bleakly amused memory of the men she indiscriminately married. She possesses a certain basic feminine health which causes her to endure without much intelligence but with a native grit which would promise growth if there were any support for it in the environment.

The town's cultural center is the lodge whose members call themselves the Knights of the White Magnolias (they are the subject of Part Two). In 1902 the lodge almost reached the proportions of a national organization; in 1962 it is reduced to seven members. They are the town's detritus, old game-playing fogies, an aged shell-shocked veteran of World War I, Colonel Kinkaid, and several spineless youths. In their heyday the White Magnolias shared a secure faith: white supremacy! They have given up the bed sheets of the Ku Klux Klan but they have the same mentality. They are the sloppy remnants of a past age, and only the cynic among them, a man hopelessly given to fat propped up by hateful indifference, recognizes this. With the collapse of the Magnolias which takes place at their last meeting even the little life they cling to for its gruff congeniality expires. They are left with nothing but their paltry jobs.

Colonel Kinkaid, the oldest living graduate of a Southern military school, is the outstanding figure in the play (he is the pivotal character of Part Three). His blunderbuss oaths and chronic absentmindedness provide most of the play's big laughs; he is also the most sympathetic of the people we meet. For he has survived a real experience: the terror, insanity, filth and comradeship of war in the trenches. He was once genuinely in love with a girl he didn't marry, and he has had someone he could wholeheartedly admire: "Black Jack" John Pershing, commander in chief of the AEF. In his last hour the Colonel says of himself in fear and loneliness, "Ah think ah'm fixin' to die"—which is true of the entire society of which he is the "symbolic" core.

The Colonel's son and heir is wealthy. He is a capitalist speculator typical of the affluent gentry of Bradleyville. He is a tense and emotionally baffled man, and

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THE NATION

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Editorial
September 18, 1976

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his business partner is a crude and crafty stuffed shirt. It is clear then that not only the saloon keeper, the feckless youths, the supermarket foreman, the no-accounts are dispossessed of all sound bearings but the well-to-do too are similarly afflicted. Their wives are either baby-doll ornaments on their husbands' estates or women still perky enough to scorn their husbands' emptiness and itching to break loose somehow, somewhere, yet clinging to household security and particles of their former affection.

The play's language is ripe and racy within its twang of starvation. As we progress through the evenings we gather a sense of a prevailing lunacy. It is laughable and finally pathetic.

There would be little point at present to assess the measure of Preston Jones's talent. Suffice it to note that he strikes a chord that should be heeded and appreciated as it has been across the country since 1973 through presentations in numerous regional, university, civic and professional theatres.

There is much repetition, which adds to rather than detracts from the play's mood and meaning. There is not much "plot," but that hardly matters: the play *exists* and takes hold as very few new American plays these days have done.

Though I am not sure that the production always keeps a just balance between the ludicrous and the bitter, it is nevertheless distinctly effective. It is the best of Alan Schneider's direction, intelligently scrupulous if at moments given to softening touches to make certain characters more likable than they need be. I would rather they had been kept "dry." Ben Edwards's settings for the Magnolia meeting place at a run-down hotel evokes the mustiness of slow decay; Jane Greenwood's costuming is, as always, altogether apt.

The cast on the whole is remarkably good. Fred Gwynne possibly plays too much for laughs as Colonel Kinkaid among the Magnolias, but as the last living graduate his sharply drawn portrait makes for a memorable performance which will bring him honors as it earns him plaudits. Diane Ladd has a refreshing breeziness as Lu Ann though the characterization requires a little "lining" of deeper feeling. Patricia Roe as Kinkaid junior's wife is nicely tart with precisely the right tinge of warmth. Henderson Forsythe in two roles—the Magnolias' Imperial Wizard and the blunt businessman—is convincingly authentic in both. If space permitted, pleasant words would be added for Lee Richardson (though not quite the "type" as the younger Kinkaid), Graham Beckel as Lu Ann's brother and Baxter Harris as one of her husbands and Patrick Hines also cast against type as the red-headed owner of the saloon. □

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FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

It's odd how from time to time a most unprepossessing film will take the collective fancy of the movie critics. (It's also disconcerting, for it places the regiment out of step with me.) A case in point is *Bugsy Malone*, a burlesque, with song and dance, of the gang-war pictures of the Prohibition 1930s. The general reaction quite properly lauds the sets, choreography and musical interludes of this work; Alan Parker, the author/director, and his associates applied taste and wit to the look and sound of the film. But they had the further notion to cast it with children in adult disguise, and this most dubious jape has also been well received.

Some children can act extremely well—as children. But if you put a topcoat on a pre-adolescent boy and stick a mustache on his lip and a cigar in his hand, he inevitably looks like rainy Saturday in grandma's attic. Boys do not move like men and, Lord knows, they don't sound like men. If you require them to pretend that they are men, they feel foolish and look foolish, creating an all-around state of embarrassment.

I speak of the boys in this regard. The girls of *Bugsy Malone* raise a different problem. Whether it is that the line separating girlhood from womanhood is more diffused than that dividing boys from men, or because, what with make-up and skillful dressmaking, one can create some ambiguity as to a female's age, the ladies of the cast appear considerably further along the road to maturity than do their masculine escorts. The simple fact, I suspect, is that they are older—after all, it is undesirable to present a chorus line composed entirely of flat chests and pudgy legs. So for the most part the dolls of this juvenile *Guys and Dolls* can pass as nubile, but then the problem is that in the film's more tender moments they seem to be fooling around in an unbecoming manner with their girl friends' kid brothers.

The two dominant gags in this nostalgic exercise are machine guns that spray custard, alleged to be lethal, and undersized period cars operated by pedal power; those are whimsies that do not improve with repetition, and if their effect was intended to be satiric, its application escaped me. I can imagine, though with misgivings, that a travesty of the Nixon junta might be cast with children. There was something puerile about the jealousies and tantrums of the White House conspirators' club, as operated by Haldeman and Ehrlichman and presided over by Dick, the neighborhood bully. But the Prohibition mobsters did not much resemble children, however vicious. They were self-made businessmen of a particularly hardheaded breed, in that they employed bullets instead of stock proxies to eliminate presumptuous competitors.

The strange thing is that, with nostalgia now selling briskly on the stands of popular entertainment, *Bugsy Malone* would undoubtedly have worked well enough with a cast of voting age. The songs (voices mercifully, if grotesquely, dubbed) are witty period imitations, the dances are stylish (the boys, it should be said, come to life as soon as they begin hoofing) and the main speakeasy set is an amusing piece of complex camouflage. It's too bad that someone had the bright idea of using kids. □

CASSANDRA'S DAUGHTER

One day every dog's ears will twitch
like tuning forks in this town
and they will howl in chorus
to a bass rumble
long before we hear the first stone roar
or see the boulders roll.
Then the earth's trembling will rattle
our bones like desert gourds
and cracks will race
across the land like roadrunners.
Even now mountain rock fields wait
above the golf course for San Andreas
to split this valley's great dry belly.

Listen, last night in a dream
I stood on a hot street in Guatemala
and saw the mud walls crumble.
People ran with their souls
flying out of their mouths.

Barbara Eve

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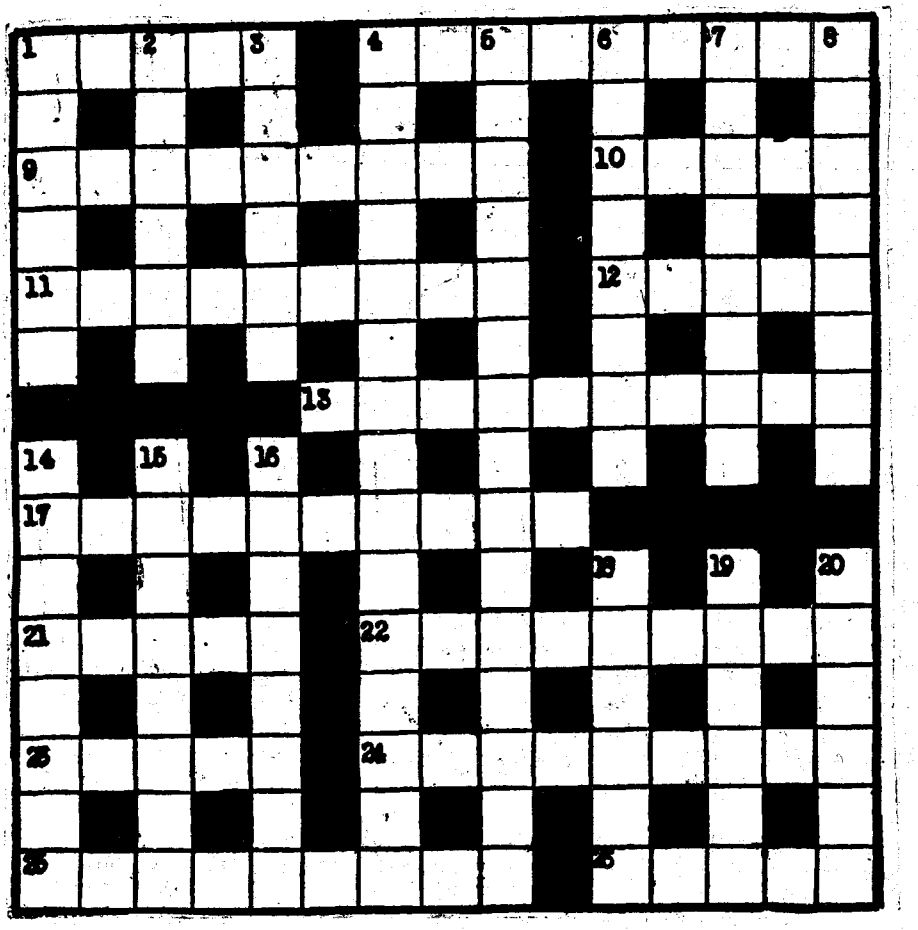
Crossword Puzzle No. 1649

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 There's money in music, as one observes. (5)
4 An obviously religious band. (5,4)
9 One who is crazy about the spread of fruit, technically? (9)
10 and 2 down Repairing in urban fashion implies the start of a success story. (5,2,4)
11 Have less than good words to say about our descent on it. (4-5)
12 Concerning a matter of fisticuffs, it seems. (5)
13 They should work with a certain amount of pride, possibly. (4-6)
17 One usually can't unless it is small, but this is a good place for 1 across. (10)
21 In Carolina nothing reputedly could be made of this, as one might imply. (5)
22 It might be difficult to credit your standing this way. (2,7)
23 Poe referred to it as Greece. (5)
24 Possible symbol of the Presidency at one time, often clutched by the young. (5,4)
25 Probable output of flowers made from the elder once. (9)
26 Macbeth's death was. (5)

DOWN

1 The absence of people implies the absence of corporeality. (6)
2 See 10 across
3 Smith doesn't use the kind that slides. (6)
4 He introduced the members of the band to the minority, it seems. (8,7)
5 Such an expression implies a certain amount of confidence. (7,3,3,2)
6 Urges a boy to be prepared for the course. (3,5)
7 Soap operas feature them, so deep is the involvement. (8)
8 Certainly not a loose description of what might be commonly drunk in the worst way. (8)
14 Such a dog might be rather jumpy. (8)
15 A very loud nagging woman about still might not call for this! (8)
16 At barely possible circumstances for what a rat might be found in? (8)
18 Putting a light in where you sleep sounded asinine! (6)
19 Perhaps they make sauce for what might be cut with lamb. (6)
20 Sat awkwardly on 16 without a sort of table, or 18 without a bed, hopelessly lost. (6)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1648

ACROSS: 1 and 18 Partial eclipse; 5 Assuage; 9 Tagging; 10 Larding; 11, 12 and 13 Bread and water; 14 Endorse; 16 Summary; 21 Dancing; 24, 26 and 27 Brave New World; 28 Endemic; 29 Gradate; 30 Sprites; 31 Refuses. DOWN: 1 Potable; 2 Ragweed; 3 Iliad; 4 Luggage; 5 Alludes; 6 and 17 Straw man; 7 Arietta; 8 Eagerly; 15 Rip; 18 Emblems; 19 Leander; 20 Eunuchs; 21 Dowager; 22 Inroads; 23 Goddess; 25 Emmet; 27 Wharf.

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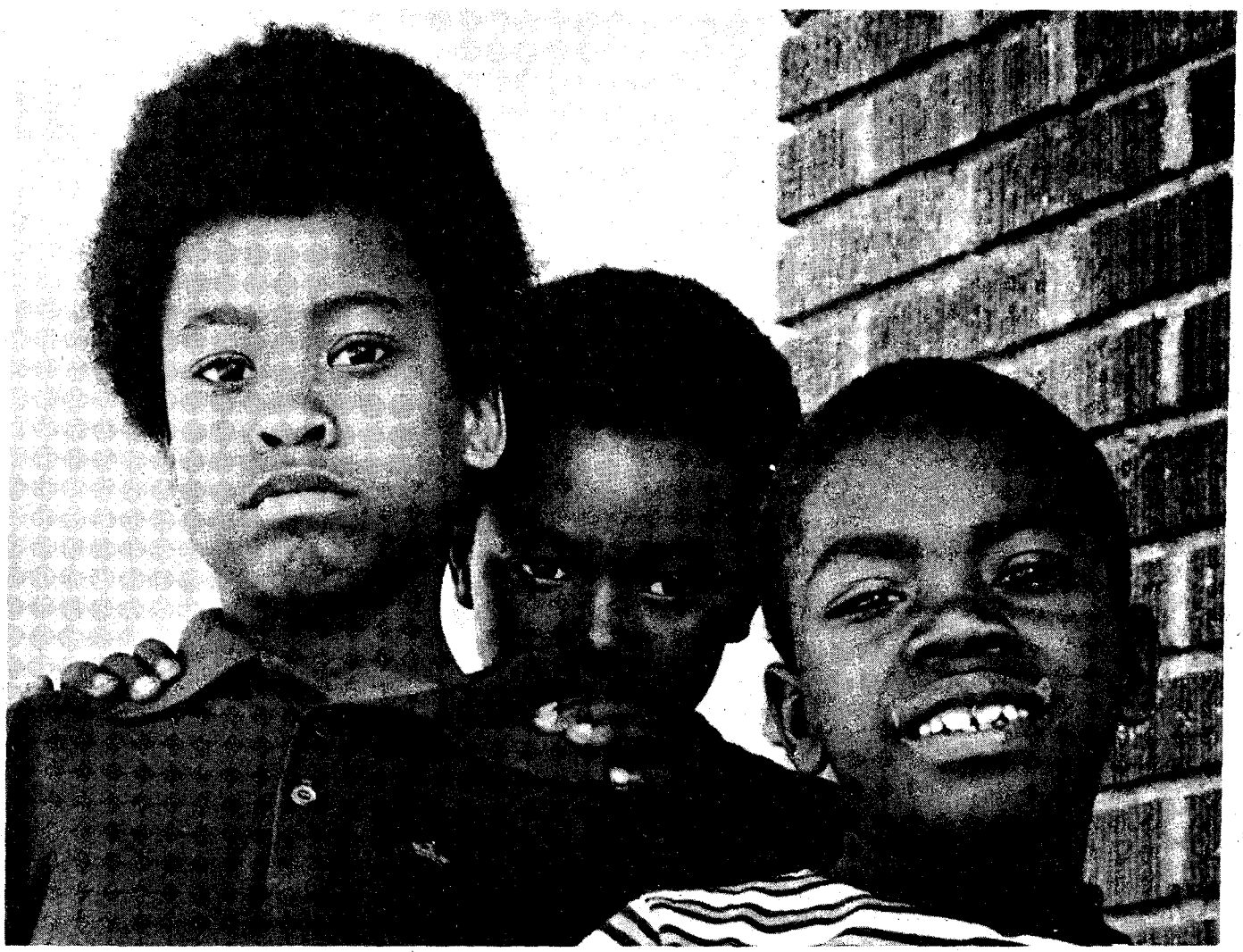

Florrie Segelman

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